HISTORY OF THE PLAGUE IN LONDON

DANIEL DEFOE

PR3404
.J8
1895

5, 12, 23

From the Library of
Professor Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield
Bequeathed by him to
the Library of
Princeton Theological Seminary

PR3404
.J8
1895

LONGMANS' ENGLISH CLASSICS

EDITED BY

GEORGE RICE CARPENTER, A.B.

PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC AND ENGLISH COMPOSITION IN COLUMBIA COLLEGE

DANIEL DEFOE

JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR

DANIEL DE FOE

(After an engraving by Van der Gucht)

Longmans' English Classics

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
MAY 12 1923
THEOLOGIAL SEMINARY

DANIEL DEFOE'S

JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR

EDITED
WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

GEORGE RICE CARPENTER
PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC AND ENGLISH COMPOSITION IN COLUMBIA COLLEGE

NEW YORK
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
AND LONDON
1895

Copyright, 1895
BY
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

TROW DIRECTORY
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY
NEW YORK

PREFACE

UNABLE to obtain access to a copy of the exceedingly rare first edition of the "Journal of the Plague Year," I have been forced to content myself with reproducing the common text, frequently, and, it is to be feared, carelessly, reprinted during the present century. No alterations have been made except by the correction of obvious misprints, slight changes (for the sake of clearness and uniformity) in Defoe's erratic punctuation, the omission of a few passages inappropriate for school use, and the rough division of the work into something like chapters. For this last procedure there is no warrant but necessity. No boy of to-day can be expected, undriven, to find his way through the mazes of Defoe's narrative without some such aid. The method of annotation is very simple. I have merely attempted to explain such words, phrases, or allusions as might puzzle a young reader. Defoe's style I have not attempted to *correct*, but I have frequently indicated the points at which his usage differs from the accepted usage of to-day.

Defoe's original title, "The Journal of the Plague Year," has been restored in this edition. The current title of the work, "The History of the Plague," comes from the second edition, published after Defoe's death, and, to all appearances, without any previous authorization by him of the change in name.

G. R. CARPENTER.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, August, 1895.

INTRODUCTION

I. BIOGRAPHY

The great journalist and novelist, Daniel Defoe, was born in a parish of London frequently referred to in the "Journal of the Plague Year," that of St. Giles, Cripplegate, in 1659, of a family of Flemish extraction, whose name, Foe, he changed, in middle life, for reasons not easy to understand, to De Foe or Defoe. His father, a butcher by trade and a Dissenter by religion, placed his son, in 1673, at an academy near London, where he was prepared for the ministry under the charge of Charles Morton, afterwards a prominent clergyman at Charlestown, Massachusetts, and vice-president of Harvard College, a man of learning and originality, whose excellent practice it was to drill his pupils, with more than usual care, in the use of their mother-tongue, as well as in the ancient and modern languages. Defoe went into business, not into the ministry, though throughout his life his mind was at various times much interested in religious and ethical questions.

Of the life of no famous writer of his time do we know less that is definite. In 1683 he was what we should call a commission-merchant for hosiery. In 1684 he married. Up to 1692, in which year he became a bankrupt, owing his creditors some seventeen thousand pounds, we know only that he had visited Spain and Portugal, and had made several journeys to Scotland; that he was an active member, sometimes preaching, of a suburban dissenting congregation; that, moved no doubt by patriotic and religious zeal, he took part in the reckless anti-Catholic rebellion headed by the Duke of Monmouth; that, like Steele, his great contemporary, he was deeply interested in politics and an ardent Whig; and that he was a member of the regiment of volunteers who escorted William III. to Guildhall after the glorious revolution of 1689. In 1694 he held a small post under the government, was a large shareholder in a brick and tile manufactory, and in prosperous circumstances.

From 1697 on, Defoe was the author of occasional political pamphlets, not without their influence on the affairs of the times, and in 1701 he became famous through an exceedingly clever political tract in verse, "The True-born Englishman," defending William III. against his detractors, who called him a foreigner, by developing the very sensible argument that the English race was such a mongrel mixture that it ill behooved it to stickle over slight differences of extraction:

> "For Englishmen to boast of generation
> Cancels their knowledge and lampoons the nation;
> A true-born Englishman's a contradiction,
> In speech an irony, in fact a fiction."

All London, at that time all the England to whom an author looked for audience, laughed at Defoe's wit and skill; eighty thousand pirated copies of the poem were sold, besides the authorized editions; and Defoe was in high favor with the King and the Whigs. His pen continued active. A dozen other Whig pamphlets appeared in 1701, and eight in 1702; among the latter was one, "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters," which, now that King William was dead, and the Tories in the ascendant, brought him into serious trouble. The tract was couched in the serious, ironical style which we associate chiefly with Swift, and purported to be the utterance of an extreme Tory and Church of England man, who gravely proposed to solve the seemingly never-ending struggle with the Dissenters by rigorous persecution and complete destruction. "Now let us crucify the thieves," are his closing words; "and may God Almighty put it into the hearts of all friends of truth to lift up a standard against pride and Antichrist, that the posterity of the sons of error may be rooted out from the face of this land for ever."

The effect of the tract was almost instantaneous. The Dissenters were alarmed. The "High-Fliers," the extreme Tories, were beguiled into expressions of approval. Then the truth leaked out, and both parties were furious. The Tories secured Defoe's punishment ; he stood three times in the pillory, paid a round fine, and was imprisoned for two years. But his shame became his glory and his discomfiture his opportunity. The plaudits of the Whig mob made his exposure in the pillory a public festival, at which was hawked about and widely sold a "Hymn to the Pillory," of Defoe's own composition, not less insulting to the befooled Tories than the original pamphlet :

"Tell 'em the men that placed him here
Are scandals to the times,
Are at a loss to find his guilt,
And can't commit his crimes."

Defoe's imprisonment, doubtless wearisome and trying to the health, was the foundation of a great success for him and of lasting benefit to the nation, for, though his enforced inactivity ruined his business, it led him to the founding of the first English paper of any importance, the *Review*, a vigorous political sheet, written for years entirely by Defoe, that had also the important object of amusing the public by recounting gossip of the day, thus becoming the prototype of Steele's *Tatler* (1709), which, in its turn, influenced profoundly the literature and the civilization of England and of the continent.

From Defoe's release in 1704 until his death in 1731 we have only few and barren details in regard to his life. This is due to two causes : first, his strange taciturnity and reserve, which sometimes delighted in mystifying those who knew and loved him best as to his employment, the state of his fortune, and even his whereabouts ; and, second, the fact that he was during those years in peculiar relations with the government, which employed him in a variety of ways for the furtherance of political and party schemes. The fact that he thus served successive ministries and radically different parties seemed at the time to be complete proof of dishonesty, and Addison, never particularly broadminded, referred to him as "a false, shuffling, prevaricating rascal." From all that can be gathered, however, it is anything but evident that Defoe was dishonest. His actions, his pamphlets, his utterances of every sort were singularly in accord, for the most part, with those of Steele, a blunt and honest Whig, if there ever was one. His secret services to the government, which from time to time called for his presence in various parts of the kingdom, seem never, except in the instance of his remaining as a sort of spy on certain Tory journals, after the Whigs came into power again, to have been inconsistent with a plain sense of public duty. Finally, even in the doubtfully diplomatic action just mentioned, reflection shows us that he conducted himself with scrupulous self-restraint toward his political opponents, using the advantage he had over them only so far as to attempt to modify their more harmful extravagances of expression. His own opinions were remarkably constant. On the whole, the fairest and most succinct criticism of his conduct and his services is that of a contemporary paper, which, commenting upon his recent death, remarked : "His knowledge of men, especially those in high life (with whom he had formerly been very conversant), had weakened his attachment to any political party ; but in the main he was in the interest of civil and religious liberty, in behalf of which he appeared on several remarkable occasions."

Defoe's earnest and grave face has come down to us through several portraits, one of the best of which is that reproduced as a frontispiece to this volume. His general appearance is strikingly described in the proclamation issued by the government in 1703, after the publication of the "Shortest Way with the Dissenters," offering fifty pounds for the discovery of his retreat :—"He is a middle-sized, spare man, about forty years old, of a brown complexion, and dark-brown coloured hair, but wears a wig ; a hooked nose, a sharp chin, grey eyes, and a large mole near his mouth."

Defoe's strongest characteristics are those of the intellect. Franklin, his contemporary, was perhaps most like him. Both were valued political agents, both acute in estimating the weight of public opinion and in devising means for influencing it ; both were fertile in expedients and in projects for promoting the public welfare. Defoe's accurate observation, his clear and cold imagination, his plain and convincing logic made him what he was and his works what they are. His life was, in many respects, an unhappy one. Like Steele, he was often in debt and in trouble ; unlike Steele, he was distinctly a solitary man. From his immediate relations he was frequently estranged. He died alone, in lodgings, under circumstances peculiarly affecting. With the reigning literary "set" he had few or no connections. A pious Dissenter, of the sturdy common stock that frowned on the play, on dice and drink, and on all current forms of frivolity, he was perforce isolated, by temperament, by breeding, by occupation and opportunity, from the fashionable life of his day. His relations with his great contemporaries were few. Addison despised him, Swift made him the mark of a stinging epigram,[1] Pope insulted him after his death, and Steele, though he referred to him with respect, could have known little of him. It is strange to think that this outcast from the brilliant life of the period, should have proved more truly famous than those then most highly esteemed by the critics. To a great extent the reputation of Swift and Pope, of Addison and Steele, is now confined to the bookish—the property of the educated and the refined, while "Robinson Crusoe" still amuses and instructs thousands, children and common people, as well as grown folk scholars, in many lands and in many languages.

---

[1] "The fellow that was pilloried, I have forgot his name."—*A Letter . . . concerning the Sacramental Test* (1708).

It is striking, too, to notice that Defoe is the only one of the great authors of Queen Anne's reign whose name is still borne by his direct descendants. Addison, Swift, and Pope were childless. Both Steele's sons died in their youth. But Daniel Defoe, great-great-great-grandson of the author of "Robinson Crusoe" and "Captain Singleton," is now, as so many of his ancestor's favorite characters were, an English seaman. Butcher, author, calico-printer, box-maker, sailor—the list of the Defoes' trades is a fitting type of the permanency of the people. From among them, at intervals, a great genius, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, separates himself for a few decades, makes in literature or in art a lasting record of their unuttered thoughts, or feelings, or dreams; and from him spring, not other geniuses, but common folk like those who bore him, continuing the great chain of human action and human inheritance.

II. WORKS

Defoe was by far the most voluminous writer of his time. Not only was he for long periods connected with seven newspapers, of some of which he was rather the author than a contributor, but for a third of a century he wrote large numbers of political tracts and pamphlets, many of which appeared anonymously. A list of his writings made by Mr. Lee, one of his most painstaking biographers, includes two hundred and fifty-four separate publications. This list may enumerate writings not by Defoe, but it is unlikely that the estimate largely exceeds the truth. Probably it falls below it.

It is not, however, as a journalist and a pamphleteer that Defoe is known in English literature, though it was to such work that he gave his best years, but as a novelist, He was sixty years old when, after a life that had brought him into intercourse with many kinds of men, after long experience as a writer, when his knowledge and his power were alike fully ripe, that he turned from his moral and political productions, from "The Family Instructor" (1718) and "A Friendly Rebuke to one Parson Benjamin" (1719), to a narrative of the "Life and Strange, Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner." The book was an instant success. Edition followed edition with rapidity, and from the very first it penetrated to an astonishing degree through the middle to the lower classes of the community. The strong popular taste for stories of adventure Defoe continued to supply, either in the form of exciting narratives of dangerous deeds, or in the kindred form of somewhat sensational accounts of extraordinary phenomena. To the first class belong "The King of the Pirates" (1719), the "Memoirs of a Cavalier" (1720), "The Life, Adventures, and Piracies of the Famous Captain Singleton" (1720), "The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders" (1721), "The History and Remarkable Life of the Truly Honourable Colonel Jacque, vulgarly called Colonel Jack" (1722), and several others. To the second class belong "The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell" (1720), a noted fortune-teller, the "Journal of the Plague Year" (1722), and other less well-known productions.

That these were the novels that Defoe wrote with seeming pleasure and the people read with evident avidity is interesting for several reasons. First, they were virtually the earliest English novels. Their predecessors had been metrical romances, long narratives of chivalrous deeds, allegories, or collections of anecdotes or facetious tales. No English writer before Defoe, except Bunyan, had produced a fictitious narrative in prose that had deeply interested the people at large. Second, a similar taste for similar productions, usually known as "picaresque"[1] novels, was common at about this time in several other European literatures. Starting in Spain, it reached France, and then England and Germany.[1] This singular appetite for the escapades of rogues and rascals was the token of a change in the attitude of the people toward literature. Literature had meant to them only the ideal and unreal romances of chivalry; now it meant the realistic treatment of the actual life around them. The people had become conscious of the romance of their own making. Third, this interest in contemporary life as the subject-matter for fiction, once started, has continued almost without interruption to the present day. Fielding and Smollett followed Defoe, and Thackeray and Dickens followed them. We read gladly at times resuscitations of the old chivalric romances, in the novels of Scott, for instance; but we are, as a rule, most interested in what we know and feel belongs to the actual, the real, the possible, for human creatures such as we are, and that is why the thieving boy in "Colonel Jack," the reckless young sailor in "Captain Singleton," and the lonely outcast in "Robinson Crusoe" appeal to us so strongly.

---

[1] From *picaro*, a Spanish word for a rogue or sharper.

Defoe's novels as a whole have certain definite characteristics. In the first place, they all pretend to be actual records of fact. There was of course no "Robinson Crusoe," who wrote two volumes about his adventures and his travels. Defoe was a mere child at the time of the plague of 1665, and could have had only the most trivial recollections of it. Yet these books, and Defoe's books in general, took on the semblance of autobiographies, and were not uncommonly accepted as such. In the second place, all of Defoe's novels have a marked religious or ethical trend. Each has a moral lesson. That of "Robinson Crusoe" is the lesson of work. Industry, thoughtful, prudent, and frugal living, the resolute bearing of misfortune, submission to the will of God,—these make even the reckless and vicious man a happy and useful citizen. The "Journal of the Plague Year" extols the same virtues, to be persisted in even in situations of the utmost terror. In the third place, Defoe's novels, in spite of being fiction, and in spite of seemingly going out of their way at times for the sake of a moral, produce an astonishing effect of reality. It is almost impossible to believe, for instance, that Defoe had not lived through the plague year in London as a grown man. This is due partly to his clever use of minute details, partly to his essential historical accuracy in the main points of the story.

---

[1] See Perry's *English Literature in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 282-322.

III. THE JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR

The occasion which led to the composition of "The Journal of the Plague Year" was an outbreak of the plague in southern France. Defoe, like the veteran journalist he was, immediately began to offer the public detailed information in regard to what had happened in London in the last "visitation," that of 1665. His activity took three forms: (1) short articles in *Applebee's Journal*, a general periodical of the time; (2) the "Journal of the Plague Year," published March 17, 1722; and (3) "Due Preparations for the Plague" (1722), a volume of about the same size as the "Journal," describing, among other things, the different fortunes of two families in the outbreak of 1665. With good authorities Defoe was well supplied. Dr. Nathaniel Hodges, a physician who remained in active service throughout the plague, had published, in 1672, an historical account of it. A collection of the bills of mortality for 1665 had appeared. In addition to these Defoe is said to have made use of a pamphlet by the Rev. Thomas Vincent, "God's Terrible Voice in the City" (1667). Brayley, in his valuable edition of the "Journal" (1835), declares that Defoe drew also from a manuscript treatise on the plague in London, now preserved in the British Museum, by a physician, Dr. William Boghurst. Besides all these sources of information, it must not be forgotten that Defoe, with the insatiable curiosity and accurate memory so characteristic of him, must have had at hand an abundance of material derived from eye-witnesses of the events of that fatal year. Add such recollections as may have been burned into the mind of a child, and we have data enough to equip either an historian or a novelist.

The two best known contemporary accounts of the plague are those preserved in the diaries of Evelyn and of Pepys. In regard to facts they agree substantially with Defoe; but their point of view was radically different. Evelyn, scholar, official, man of letters, regarded the plague almost as a visitation of God upon the poor, the ravages of which he could contemplate with devout equanimity from his carriage-windows. In his voluminous journal virtually all that concerns the outbreak is what is printed below :

> 16 July.—There died of the plague in London this weeke 1100, and in the weeke following above 2000. Two houses were shut up in our parish.
>
> 2 Aug.—A solemn fast thro' England to deprecate God's displeasure against the land by pestilence and war; our Dr preaching on 26 Levit : v [erses] 41, 42, that the meanes to obtain remission of punishment was not to repine at it, but humbly to submit to it.
>
> 8 Aug.—I waited on the D. of Albemarle, who was resolved to stay at the Cock-pit in St. James's Parke. Died this week in London 4000.
>
> 15 Aug.—There perished this week 5000.
>
> 28 Aug.—The contagion still increasing and growing now all about us, I sent my Wife and whole family (two or three necessary servants excepted) to my Brother's at Wotton, being resolved to stay at my house myselfe, and to looke after my charge, trusting in the providence and goodnesse of God.
>
> 7 Sept.—Came home, there perishing neere 10,000 poore creatures weekly; however, I went all along the citty and suburbs from Kent Streete to St. James's, a dismal passage, and dangerous to see so many coffines expos'd in the streetes, now thin of people; the shops shut up, and all in mourneful silence, not knowing whose turn might be next. I went to ye Duke of Albemarle for a pest-ship, to wait on our infected men, who were not a few.
>
> 11 October.—To London, and went thro' ye whole citty, having oc-

> casion to alight out of the coach in severall places about buisinesse of mony, when I was environ'd with multitudes of poore pestiferous creatures begging almes: the shops universally shut up, a dreadful prospect! I din'd with my Lo. General; was to receive £10,000, and had guards to convey both myselfe and it, and so returned home, thro' God's infinite mercy.

Pepys's attitude was not materially different. The plague interfered only slightly with his comfort, and not at all with his business. His light-heartedness scarcely flagged even during the worst months, and, like Evelyn, he thought of the plague mainly as a terrible affliction of the lower or middle classes, not likely much to trouble the rich, the noble, and the gay. The following extracts from his diary are characteristic of him and of the whole group of court dependents, whom Defoe speaks of so coldly, almost as of a foreign race:

> September 3rd (Lord's day).—Up; and put on my coloured silk suit very fine, and my new periwigg, bought a good while since, but durst not wear, because the plague was in Westminster when I bought it; and it is a wonder what will be the fashion after the plague is done, as to periwiggs, for nobody will dare to buy any haire, for fear of the infection, that it had been cut off the heads of people dead of the plague. To church, where a sorry dull parson, and so home and most excellent company with Mr. Hill and discourse of musique. . . .
>
> 14th.—To London, where I have not been now a pretty while. . . . Away back again to the Beare at the Bridge foot, and there called for a biscuit and a piece of cheese and gill of sacke, being forced to walk over the Bridge, toward the 'Change, and the plague being all thereabouts. Here my news was highly welcome, and I did wonder to see the 'Change so full, I believe 200 people; but not a man or merchant of any fashion, but plain men all. And Lord! to see how I did endeavour all I could to talk with as few as I could.

The hero of Defoe's novel or history, whichever we choose to style it, was neither a scholar nor a courtier, but a plain man and citizen, a Dissenter,—fitting type, like the central character of Bunyan's great allegory, of the thought and feeling of a large, perhaps a predominating, part of the nation, and one almost unrepresented in the imaginative prose literature of the time. With the attitude of mind of this central character in Defoe's novel, Americans are especially familiar. Whoever has lived in a small New England parish, at least, will find little difficulty in making real to himself this picture of a man who, without dependence on the recognized religious forms and procedure of an established church, justly dear and helpful to so many, lived, as he firmly believed, in direct communication with God through a time of popular terror, led by His special providence, through signs and warnings, into a perilous course of life, but preserved that he might behold and profit by the example of God's dealings with men.

The reason why this religious romance of Defoe's, like Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," has held for nearly two centuries its place in English literature, the reason why a knowledge of it is still worth making a requisite of a broad education, is that it is one of the most vivid pictures imaginable of the varied scenes and experiences of a great national calamity, such as still might conceivably overtake a large community. No one can read it without a healthy quickening of the sympathies, and without receiving into his memory a series of pictures stimulating the imagination and scarcely to be effaced from the memory. The nightly dead-carts and the links, the red crosses on the doors, the pit at midnight with the half-crazed mourner, the simple waterman, the lowly artisan wanderers ; even the seemingly trivial details, the untouched purse in the deserted courtyard, the unfrightened women pillaging the warehouse,—all these remain with us for years as vivid as the actual recollections of our childhoods.

Defoe probably intended the moral of the "Journal" to be submission to the will of God. But the main teaching of the book, as we see it now, is the lesson of energy, self-control, and forethought. Nor is it a lesson to forget or pass over. We who live under the constant direction of boards of health and under the guard of organized police, need to be brought, in fact or by imagination, among circumstances where, as in the London of the seventeenth century, or in the extreme West of to-day, official law is weak, and the safety of the individual and the commonwealth depends upon the power of the citizen to protect himself, to act for himself, to think for himself.

Defoe's style has been severely criticised and warmly praised. Undoubtedly the worst that can be said of it is that it is sometimes needlessly rambling and full of digressions, as in this volume, where, for instance, a score of pages in regard to the shutting up of houses might be entirely omitted or greatly condensed, so far as the effect on the modern reader goes. On the other hand, it can be answered that Defoe may have had a motive for dwelling so constantly on that particular topic, even by iteration and accumulative effect, and that, when a book has such wonderfully permanent qualities as to retain its force and value for nearly two hundred years, it is perhaps foolish for us to determine how it could have been made better. A less important charge against Defoe's style than verbosity is what we should call slovenliness—formless sentences, blundering syntax, careless vocabulary. Here again it may be fairly said, in defence of Defoe, that the taste of his time allowed great laxity in such matters, that Dryden and Steele are also frequently at fault when judged by standards of our own making, and that he wrote the vernacular, rather than the literary, dialect of his period. In power of producing illusion, of making a fictitious scene or event stand out with all the vividness of reality, Defoe has few equals. Here his success seems due largely to his homely idiom and to his favorite device of citing minute and trivial details. That the abandoned purse contained precisely such an odd amount of money (page 100), to quote but a single instance, impresses the reader with an instinctive confidence in the veracity of one who records, so accurately and so casually, such unimportant items.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The books prescribed for "reading" should, in the opinion of the editor of this volume, be so treated in the class-room as (1) give the pupil an adequate knowledge of the books themselves, and (2) as to lead him on to read spontaneously and with pleasure other books of the same sort or of cognate sorts. In pursuance of both aims he now ventures to suggest to such teachers, pupils, or chance readers as have no better plans of their own, the following scheme of study for the "Journal of the Plague Year:"

I. The pupil's first step must be to read at home, or in his school hours for study—preferably the former—a portion of the book, varying in length from five to twenty-five pages, according to his age and experience. In each case he should read the assigned passage *twice,* first with a view to getting an intelligent idea of the subject-matter in general, and of obtaining from it as much pleasure as possible, and second, with a view to assuring himself that he knows precisely what the author means by every word, sentence, and paragraph of the passage. He should not, of course, concern himself, in any but the rarest cases, with the etymology of particular words, or with the ferreting out of remote allusions. All words not to be found in a good dictionary, all allusions that cannot be understood by a boy or girl of ordinary information, are explained in the notes. The notes must not be relied on, however, to escape the discipline of reading. A pupil who does not have a sufficiently definite idea of common words or expressions, which the author uses and which are not explained in the notes, to appreciate the author's meaning or the point of his allusion, must consult an encyclopædia, a dictionary, or some wiser friend.

II. The second step in the treatment of a book prescribed for reading is taken in the class-room. Here the instructor, with as little formality as possible, should make certain that each student has mastered the part of the book designated, *i.e.*, that he has an intelligent idea of the subject-matter, as a whole and in detail; that he really understands what the author's object was in this particular part of his work; and that he enjoys and appreciates the dominant quality of the passage, whatever it may be.

III. It is important, also, that the student should connect the information he obtains from the passage in question with the information afforded by his other studies and by his own experience and observation. Wherever the "Journal of the Plague Year," for example, brings forward matters touched on in any other branch of study, or suggests questions of thought or action made prominent by local interests, the pupil's mind should be taught to fasten tenaciously on these points, that he may realize the interconnection between subjects of study seemingly diverse, and gain a flexibility of mind that passes readily from one point of view to another, and makes every possible use of every fact and fancy it has once come into the possession of.

IV. It is even more important that the pupil should be stimulated to carry on lines of study and reading which the prescribed book suggests. He may with profit read a short biography of Defoe or passages from Mr. Wright's larger "Life," for more detailed information in regard to Defoe's life than that furnished by the Introduction. He should especially be encouraged to read, or reread, "Robinson Crusoe" and "Captain Singleton," not only for the sake of the pleasure afforded by these narratives of adventure, but with the thoughtfulness demanded by even works of fiction that reflect the character of English civilization in the first part of the eighteenth century. Such reading of fiction does much to develop in the student a taste, in these days too frequently wholly absent, for thoughtful reading of all sorts, and for observation and reflection in regard to the life around him.

V. The "Journal of the Plague Year" takes its place among the books prescribed for "reading" in 1896 and 1897 as a representative of the literature of what is commonly called the age of Queen Anne. As we have seen, it may well stand as an example of the literature that appealed to the popular taste, but it is far from being a fair example of the more fashionable literature of the time. The student, therefore, after getting a general view of the period from any good short history of English literature, should go on to read Swift's "Gulliver's Travels" (as affording an easy transition from Defoe's novels to the more dignified productions of Addison, Steele, and Pope), the Sir Roger de Coverley papers of Addison and Steele, and anything of Pope's in which he can be induced to take an interest.

VI. Exercises in composition based upon the book should not be neglected. These may be mere summaries, simple narratives, or descriptions. If such exercises be continued long, however, an effort should be made to introduce other elements than that of summarizing—the mere giving back again, in presentable form, of facts already designated. The student should learn to gather facts for himself. It is his power of observation that needs to be trained, when once his power of acquiring what is pointed out to him is thoroughly tested. It is recommended, therefore, that composition subjects be chosen, as much as possible, after the summarizing is once done thoroughly, from the subjects of reading and study referred to under III., IV., and V., or else from material furnished by the student's own life and experience. Care should be taken, it must also be remarked, to point out to the pupil the virtues and the vices of Defoe's style, as judged by the standards of to-day. What the young writer must especially avoid is Defoe's careless syntax and loose sentence-structure. What he may wisely emulate is Defoe's wonderful skill in the choice of words. The teacher will do well to bring these rhetorical topics before the class clearly and with some detail in the course of the reading and discussion of the present volume. It should be borne in mind, however, that many of the editor's notes that seem at first sight to be corrections of Defoe's style are merely comments or explanations from the point of view of modern prose idiom and usage.

VII. The following list of books may be of service. The best short accounts of Defoe's life are those by Mr. Leslie Stephen in the "Dictionary of National Biography," by Mr. George A. Aitken, as a "General Introduction" to his reprint of the "Romances and Narratives of Daniel Defoe" (London : Dent), and by Mr. Saintsbury in the "Encyclopædia Britannica." Of the larger biographies, that of the late Professor Minto, in the English Men of Letters Series, is the most compact ; that of William Lee (London, 1869) the most detailed ; and that of Mr. Thomas Wright (New York, 1894) the most recent and the most interesting. The best critical essay on Defoe is that by Mr. Leslie Stephen, contained in the first series of his "Hours in a Library." Mrs. Oliphant's essay in the *Century* for September, 1893, is less valuable, but more generally accessible and perhaps more likely to interest younger readers.

VIII. Within the limits of a school edition it is impossible to give an adequate description of the localities mentioned in the "Journal of the Plague Year." The counties and large places outside of London can be easily found on any map of England. The smaller places near London, or now included in London, can be found without great difficulty on a good map of London and its environs, such, for example, as that in Baedeker's "London." For a general idea of London, the bounds of the city proper, the gates, the chief wards and parishes, the student may consult the map in any good encyclopædia.

An encyclopædia will also give him almost all the other general information he needs. Streets still existing may be readily located on an indexed map; that in Baedeker's "London" is most accessible. All necessary information in regard to streets or buildings that have now disappeared will be found in Wheatley's "London, Past and Present" (3 vols., London, 1891).

A good account of the London of Charles the Second's time is given in Mr. Walter Besant's "London" (New York: Harper's; published originally in *Harper's Magazine* for January, 1892).

A JOURNAL OF THE PLAGUE YEAR

BEING OBSERVATIONS OR MEMORIALS OF THE MOST REMARKABLE
OCCURRENCES, AS WELL PUBLIC AS PRIVATE, WHICH
HAPPENED IN LONDON DURING THE LAST
GREAT VISITATION IN 1665

WRITTEN BY A CITIZEN, WHO CONTINUED ALL THE
WHILE IN LONDON

NEVER MADE PUBLIC BEFORE

JOURNAL

OF

THE PLAGUE YEAR

It was about the beginning of September, 1664, that I, among the rest of my neighbours, heard, in ordinary discourse, that the plague was returned again in Holland; for it had been very violent there, and particularly at Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in the year 1663, whither they say, it was brought, some said from Italy, others from the Levant,[1] among some goods which were brought home by their[2] Turkey fleet; others said it was brought from Candia;[3] others from Cyprus. It mattered not from whence it came; but all agreed it was come into Holland again.

We had no such thing as printed newspapers in those days, to spread rumours and reports of things, and to improve them by the invention of men, as I have lived to see practised since.[4] But such things as those were gathered from the letters of merchants and others, who corresponded abroad, and from them was[5] handed about by word of mouth only; so that things did not spread instantly over the whole nation, as they do now. But it seems that the

[1] The East Notice the derivation of the word.

[2] The Dutch.

[3] Crete.

[4] The first daily paper in England, the *Daily Courant*, was begun in 1702, and from that date on newspapers increased rapidly in number and influence. Defoe himself was a pioneer in such work. His *Weekly Review* first appeared in 1704. Steele's *Tatler* was begun in 1709.

[5] Were.

government had a true account of it,[1] and several counsels[2] were held about ways to prevent its coming over, but all was kept very private. Hence it was that this rumour died off again, and people began to forget it, as a thing we were very little concerned in, and that we hoped was not true; till the latter end of November, or the beginning of December, 1664, when two men, said to be Frenchmen, died of the plague in Longacre, or rather at the upper end of Drury Lane. The family they were in endeavoured to conceal it as much as possible; but as it had gotten some vent[3] in the discourse of the neighbourhood, the secretaries of state[4] got knowledge of it. And concerning themselves to inquire about it, in order to be certain of the truth, two physicians and a surgeon were ordered to go to the house, and make inspection. This they did, and finding evident tokens[5] of the sickness upon both the bodies that were dead, they gave their opinions publicly, that they died of the plague. Whereupon it was given in to the parish clerk, and he also returned them[6] to the hall;[7] and it was printed in the weekly bill of mortality in the usual manner, thus:

PLAGUE, 2. PARISHES INFECTED, 1.

The people showed a great concern at this, and began to be alarmed all over the town, and the more, because in the last week in December, 1664, another man died in the same house, and of the same distemper: and then we were easy again for about six weeks, when none having died with any marks of infection, it was said the distemper was gone; but after that, I think it was about the 12th of February, another died in another house, but in the same parish, and in the same manner.

---

[1] The plague.

[2] Councils.

[3] Publicity.

[4] The ministry.

[5] Callous spots, not unlike warts.

[6] The deaths.

[7] Guildhall, the city hall.

This turned the people's eyes pretty much towards that end of the town ;[1] and the weekly bills showing an increase of burials in St. Giles's parish more than usual, it began to be suspected that the plague was among the people at that end of the town ; and that many had died of it, though they had taken care to keep it as much from the knowledge of the public as possible. This possessed the heads of the people very much, and few cared to go through Drury Lane, or the other streets suspected, unless they had extraordinary business, that obliged them to it.

This increase of the bills stood thus ; the usual number of burials in a week, in the parishes of St. Giles's in the Fields, and St. Andrew's, Holborn, were from twelve to seventeen or nineteen each, few more or less ; but from the time that the plague first began in St. Giles's parish, it was observed that the ordinary burials increased in number considerably. For example :

From Dec. 27th to Jan. 3rd,	St. Giles's	16
	St. Andrew's	17
Jan. 3rd to Jan. 10th,	St. Giles's	12
	St. Andrew's	25
Jan. 10th to Jan. 17th,	St. Giles's	18
	St. Andrew's	18
Jan. 17th to Jan. 24th,	St. Giles's	23
	St. Andrew's	16
Jan. 24th to Jan. 31st,	St. Giles's	24
	St. Andrew's	15
Jan. 31st to Feb. 7th,	St. Giles's	21
	St. Andrew's	23
Feb. 7th to Feb. 14th,	St. Giles's	24

Whereof one of the plague.

The like increase of the bills was observed in the parishes of St. Bride's, adjoining on one side of Holborn parish, and in the parish of St. James's, Clerkenwell, adjoining on the other side of Holborn; in both which parishes the usual numbers that died weekly were from four to six or eight, whereas at that time they were increased as follows:

---

[1] The northern end.

From Dec. 20th to Dec. 27th,	St. Bride's	0
	St. James[1]	8
Dec. 27th to Jan. 3rd,	St. Bride's	6
	St. James	9
Jan. 3rd to Jan. 10th,	St. Bride's	11
	St. James	7
Jan. 10th to Jan. 17th,	St. Bride's	12
	St. James	9
Jan. 17th to Jan. 24th,	St. Bride's	9
	St. James	15
Jan. 24th to Jan. 31st,	St. Bride's	8
	St. James	12
Jan. 31st to Feb. 7th,	St. Bride's	13
	St. James	5
Feb. 7th to Feb. 14th,	St. Bride's	12
	St. James	6

Besides this, it was observed with great uneasiness by the people, that the weekly bills in general increased very much during these weeks, although it was at a time of the year when usually the bills are very moderate.

The usual number of burials within the bills of mortality for a week was from about two hundred and forty, or thereabouts, to three hundred. The last was esteemed a pretty high bill; but after this we found the bills successively increasing, as follows:

	Buried.	Increased.
December 20 to the 27th,	291	
27 to the 3rd Jan.,	349	58
January 3 to the 10th,	394	45
10 to the 17th,	415	21
17 to the 24th,	474	59

---

[1] St. James's.

This last bill was really frightful, being a higher number than had been known to have been[1] buried in one week, since the preceding visitation of 1656.

However, all this went off again, and the weather proving cold, and the frost, which began in December, still continuing very severe, even till near the end of February, attended with sharp though moderate winds, the bills decreased again, and the city grew healthy, and everybody began to look upon the danger as good as over; only that still the burials in St. Giles's continued high. From the beginning of April, especially, they stood at twenty-five each week, till the week from the 18th to the 25th, when there was[2] buried in St. Giles's parish thirty, whereof two of the plague, and eight of the spotted fever,[3] which was looked upon as the same thing; likewise the number that died of the spotted fever in the whole increased, being eight the week before, and twelve the week above named.

This alarmed us all again, and terrible apprehensions were among the people, especially the weather being now changed and growing warm, and the summer being at hand: however, the next week there seemed to be some hopes again, the bills were low, the number of the dead in all was but 388, there was none of the plague, and but four of the spotted fever.

But the following week it returned again, and the distemper was spread into two or three other parishes, viz., St. Andrew's, Holborn, St. Clement's Danes, and, to the great affliction of the city, one died within the walls,[4] in the parish of St. Mary Wool Church, that is to say, in Bearbinder Lane, near Stocks Market; in all there were nine of the plague, and six of the spotted fever. It was, however, upon inquiry, found, that this Frenchman who died in Bearbinder Lane, was one who, having lived in Longacre, near the infected houses, had removed for fear of the distemper, not knowing that he was already infected.

This was the beginning of May, yet the weather was temperate, variable, and cool enough, and people had still some hopes: that which encouraged them was, that the city was healthy, the whole ninety-seven parishes buried but fifty-four, and we began to hope that, as it was chiefly among the people at that end of the town, it might go no farther; and the rather, because the next week, which was from the 9th of May to the 16th, there died but three, of which not one within the whole city or liberties,[1] and St. Andrew's buried but fifteen, which was very low. It is true, St. Giles's buried two-and-thirty, but still, as there was but one of the plague, people began to be easy; the whole bill also was very low, for the week before the bill was but 347, and the week above mentioned but 343. We continued in these hopes for a few days. But it was but for a few, for the people were no more to be deceived thus; they searched the houses, and found that the plague was really spread every way, and that many died of it every day, so that now all our extenuations abated,[2] and it was no more to be concealed, nay, it quickly appeared that the infection had spread itself beyond all hopes of abatement; that in the parish of St. Giles's it was gotten into several streets, and several families lay all sick together; and, accordingly, in the weekly bill for the next week, the thing began to show itself; there was,[3] indeed, but fourteen set down of the plague, but this was all knavery and collusion; for [4] St. Giles's parish they buried forty in all, whereof it was certain most of them died of the plague, though they were set down of other distempers; and though the number of all the burials were [5] not increased above thirty-two, and the whole bill being but 385, yet there was fourteen of the spotted fever, as well as fourteen of the plague; and we took it for granted, upon the whole, that there were fifty died that week of the plague.

---

[1] To be. [2] Were. [3] Typhus fever. [4] Within the city proper.

[1] Certain suburbs that enjoyed especial municipal privileges.

[2] Our reasons for believing the state of things better than it really was, diminished.

[3] Were. [4] "In" has probably been omitted here. [5] Was.

The next bill was from the 23rd of May to the 30th, when the number of the plague was seventeen ; but the burials in St. Giles's were fifty-three, a frightful number ! of whom they set down but nine of the plague : but on an examination more strictly by the justices of the peace, and at the lord mayor's request, it was found there were twenty more who were really dead of the plague in that parish, but had been set down of the spotted fever, or other distempers, besides others concealed.

But those were trifling things to what followed immediately after ; for now the weather set in hot, and from the first week in June the infection spread in a dreadful manner, and the bills rise[1] high, the articles of the fever, spotted fever, and teeth,[2] began to swell : for all that could conceal their distempers, did it to prevent their neighbours shunning and refusing to converse with them ; and also to prevent authority shutting up their houses,[3] which though it was not yet practised, yet was threatened, and people were extremely terrified at the thoughts of it.

The second week in June, the parish of St. Giles's, where still the weight of the infection lay, buried 120, whereof, though the bills said but sixty-eight of the plague, everybody said there had been a hundred at least, calculating it from the usual number of funerals in that parish as above.

Till this week the city continued free, there having never any died except that one Frenchman, who[4] I mentioned before, within the whole ninety-seven parishes. Now there died four within the city, one in Wood Street, one in Fenchurch Street, and two in Crooked Lane : Southwark was entirely free, having not one yet died on that side of the water.[5]

I lived without Aldgate, about midway between Aldgate Church and Whitechapel Bars, on the left hand or north side of the street; and as the distemper had not reached to that side of the city, our neighbourhood continued very easy: but at the other end of the town their consternation was very great, and the richer sort of people, especially the nobility and gentry, from the west part of the city, thronged out of town, with their families and servants in an unusual manner; and this was more particularly seen in Whitechapel; that is to say, the Broad Street where I lived: indeed, nothing was to be seen but waggons and carts, with goods, women, servants, children, etc.; coaches filled with people of the better sort, and horsemen attending them, and all hurrying away; then empty waggons and carts appeared, and spare horses with servants, who, it was apparent, were returning, or sent from the country to fetch more people: besides innumerable numbers of men on horseback, some alone, others with servants, and, generally speaking, all loaded with baggage and fitted out for travelling, as any one might perceive by their appearance.

---

[1] Rose.

[2] A frequent cause of disease before the days of dentistry.

[3] The shutting up of their houses by authority.

[4] Whom.

[5] The Thames.

This was a very terrible and melancholy thing to see, and as it was a sight which I could not but look on from morning to night (for indeed there was nothing else of moment to be seen) it filled me with very serious thoughts of the misery that was coming upon the city, and the unhappy condition of those that would be left in it.

This hurry of the people was such for some weeks, that there was no getting at the lord mayor's door without exceeding difficulty, there was such pressing and crowding there to get passes and certificates of health, for such as travelled abroad; for, without these, there was no being admitted to pass through the towns upon the road, or to lodge in any inn. Now as there had none died in the city for all this time, my lord mayor gave certificates of health without any difficulty to all those who lived in the ninety-seven parishes, and to those within the liberties too, for awhile.

This hurry, I say, continued some weeks, that is to say, all the months of May and June, and the more because it was rumoured that an order of the government was to be issued out, to place turnpikes[1] and barriers on the road, to prevent people's travelling; and that the towns on the road would not suffer people from London to pass, for fear of bringing the infection along with them, though neither of these rumours had any foundation but in the imagination, especially at first.

I now began to consider seriously with myself, concerning my own case, and how I should dispose of myself; that is to say, whether I should resolve to stay in London, or shut up my house and flee, as many of my neighbours did. I have set this particular down so fully, because I know not but it may be of moment to those who come after me, if they come to be brought to the same distress, and to the same manner of making their choice, and therefore I desire this account may pass with them rather for a direction to themselves to act by, than a history of my actings, seeing it may not be of one farthing value to them to note what became of me.

I had two important things before me; the one was the carrying on my business and shop; which was considerable, and in which was embarked all my effects in the world; and the other was the preservation of my life in so dismal a calamity as I saw apparently was coming upon the whole city; and which, however great it was, my fears perhaps, as well as other people's, represented to be much greater than it could be.

The first consideration was of great moment to me; my trade was a saddler, and as my dealings were chiefly not by a shop or chance trade, but among the merchants, trading to the English colonies in America, so my effects lay very much in the hands of such. I was a single man, it is true, but I had a family of servants, who[2] I kept at my business; had a house, shop, and warehouses filled with goods; and, in short, to leave them all as things in such a case

[1] Gates forcing travellers to halt for toll or inspection.

[2] Whom.

must be left, that is to say, without any overseer or person fit to be trusted with them, had been to hazard the loss not only of my trade, but of my goods, and, indeed, of all I had in the world.

I had an elder brother at the same time in London, and not many years before come over from Portugal; and, advising with him, his answer was in the three words, the same that was given in another case quite different, viz., "Master, save thyself."[1] In a word, he was for my retiring into the country, as he resolved to do himself, with his family; telling me, what he had, it seems, heard abroad, that the best preparation for the plague was to run away from it. As to my argument of losing my trade, my goods, or debts, he quite confuted me: he told me the same thing which I argued for my staying, viz., That I would trust God with my safety and health, was the strongest repulse to my pretensions of losing my trade and my goods. "For," says he, "is it not as reasonable that you should trust God with the chance or risk of losing your trade, as that you should stay in so eminent a point of danger, and trust him with your life?"

I could not argue that I was in any strait as to a place where to go, having several friends and relations in Northamptonshire, whence our family first came from; and, particularly, I had an only sister in Lincolnshire, very willing to receive and entertain me.

My brother, who had already sent his wife and two children into Bedfordshire, and resolved to follow them, pressed my going very earnestly; and I had once resolved to comply with his desires, but at that time could get no horse: for, though it is true, all the people did not go out of the city of London, yet I may venture to say that, in a manner, all the horses did; for there was hardly a horse to be bought or hired in the whole city, for some weeks. Once I resolved to travel on foot with one servant; and, as many did, lie at no inn, but carry a soldier's tent with us, and so lie in the fields, the weather being very warm, and no danger from taking cold. I say, as many did, because several did so at last, especially those who had been in the armies, in the war which had not been many years past :[1] and I must needs say, that, speaking of second causes,[2] had most of the people that travelled done so, the plague had not been carried into so many country towns and houses, as it was, to the great damage, and indeed to the ruin of abundance of people.

---

[1] *St. Matthew* xxvii. 40.

But then my servant, who[3] I had intended to take down with me, deceived me, and, being frighted at the increase of the distemper, and not knowing when I should go, he took other measures, and left me, so I was put off for that time ; and, one way or other, I always found that to appoint to go away, was always[4] crossed by some accident or other, so as to disappoint[5] and put it off again ; and this brings in a story which otherwise might be thought a needless digression, viz., about these disappointments being from heaven.

It came very warmly into my mind, one morning, as I was musing on this particular thing, that, as nothing attended us without the direction or permission of Divine Power, so these disappointments must have something in them extraordinary ; and I ought to consider whether it did not evidently point out, or intimate to me, that it was the will of Heaven I should not go. It immediately followed in my thoughts, that, if it really was from God that I should stay, he was able effectually to preserve me in the midst of all the death and danger that would surround me ; and that if I attempted to secure myself by fleeing from my habitation, and acted contrary to these intimations, which I believed to be divine, it was a kind of flying from God, and that he could cause his justice to overtake me when and where he thought fit.

---

[1] The Civil War, 1642–1651.

[2] Causes following from first causes.

[3] Whom.

[4] "To be" is apparently here omitted.

[5] To disappoint myself.

These thoughts quite turned my resolutions again, and when I came to discourse with my brother again, I told him that I inclined to stay and take my lot in that station in which God had placed me; and that it seemed to be made more especially my duty, on the account of what I have said.

My brother, though a very religious man himself, laughed at all I had suggested about its being an intimation from heaven, and told me several stories of such foolhardy people, as he called them, as I was; that I ought, indeed, to submit to it as a work of heaven, if I had been any way disabled by distempers or diseases, and that then not being able to go, I ought to acquiesce in the direction of Him, who, having been my Maker, had an undisputed right of sovereignty in disposing of me; and that then there had been no difficulty to determine which was the call of his providence, and which was not: but that I should take it as an intimation from heaven that I should not go out of town, only because I could not hire a horse to go, or my fellow was run away that was to attend me, was ridiculous, since at the same time I had my health and limbs, and other servants, and might with ease travel a day or two on foot, and, having a good certificate of being in perfect health, might either hire a horse, or take post on the road, as I thought fit.

Then he proceeded to tell me of the mischievous consequences which attend the presumption of the Turks and Mahometans in Asia, and in other places, where he had been (for my brother, being a merchant, was a few years before, as I have already observed, returned from abroad, coming last from Lisbon), and how, presuming upon their professed predestinating notions, and of every man's end being predetermined, and unalterably beforehand decreed, they would go unconcerned into infected places, and converse with infected persons, by which means they died at the rate of ten or fifteen thousand a week, whereas the Europeans, or Christian merchants, who kept themselves retired and reserved, generally escaped the contagion.

Upon these arguments my brother changed my resolutions again, and I began to resolve to go, and accordingly made all things ready; for, in short, the infection increased round me, and the bills were risen to almost seven hundred a week, and my brother told me he would venture to stay no longer. I desired him to let me consider of it but till the next day, and I would resolve; and as I had already prepared everything as well as I could, as to my business, and who[1] to intrust my affairs with, I had little to do but to resolve.

I went home that evening greatly oppressed in my mind, irresolute, and not knowing what to do. I had set the evening wholly apart to consider seriously about it, and was all alone; for already people had, as it were by a general consent, taken up the custom of not going out of doors after sunset; the reasons I shall have occasion to say more of by and by.

In the retirement of this evening I endeavoured to resolve[2] first what was my duty to do, and I stated the arguments with which my brother had pressed me to go into the country, and I set against them the strong impressions which I had on my mind for staying; the visible call I seemed to have from the particular circumstance of my calling, and the care due from me for the preservation of my effects, which were, as I might say, my estate: also the intimations which I thought I had from heaven, that to me signified a kind of direction to venture, and it occurred to me that if I had what I call a direction to stay, I ought to suppose it contained a promise of being preserved, if I obeyed.

This lay close[3] to me, and my mind seemed more and more encouraged to stay than ever, and supported with a secret satisfaction[4] that I should be kept. Add to this, that, turning over the Bible, which lay before me, and while my thoughts were more than ordinary serious upon the question, I cried out, "Well, I know not what to do;

[1] Whom. [2] Determine. [3] Appealed strongly. [4] Conviction.

Lord direct me!" and the like; and at that juncture I happened to stop turning over the book, at the 91st Psalm, and casting my eye on the second verse, I read to the seventh verse exclusive; and after that, included the 10th, as follows:—"I will say of the Lord, he is my refuge, and my fortress, my God, in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day: nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the most high, thy habitation: there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," etc.

I scarce need tell the reader, that from that moment I resolved that I would stay in the town, and, casting myself entirely upon the goodness and protection of the Almighty, would not seek any other shelter whatever; and that,[1] as my times[2] were in his hands, he was as able to keep me in a time of the infection as in a time of health; and if he did not think fit to deliver me, still I was in his hands, and it was meet he should do with me as should seem good to him.

With this resolution I went to bed; and I was farther confirmed in it the next day, by the woman being taken ill with whom I had intended to intrust my house and all my affairs. But I had a farther obligation laid on me on the same side, for the next day I found myself very much out of order also; so that if I would have gone away,

[1] I was convinced that.

[2] My allotted time of life and death. Compare *Psalms* xxxi. 15.

I could not, and I continued ill three or four days, and this entirely determined my stay; so I took my leave of my brother, who went away to Dorking, in Surrey, and afterwards fetched around farther into Buckinghamshire, or Bedfordshire, to a retreat he had found out there for his family.

It was a very ill time to be sick in, for if any one complained, it was immediately said he had the plague; and though I had indeed no symptoms of that distemper, yet being very ill, both in my head and in my stomach, I was not without apprehension that I really was infected, but in about three days I grew better, the third night I rested well, sweated a little, and was much refreshed; the apprehensions of its being the infection went also quite away with my illness, and I went about my business as usual.

These things, however, put off all my thoughts of going into the country; and my brother also being gone, I had no more debate either with him, or with myself, on that subject.

It was now mid July, and the plague, which had chiefly raged at the other end of the town, and, as I said before, in the parishes of St. Giles's, St. Andrew's, Holborn, and towards Westminster, began now to come eastward, towards the part where I lived. It was to be observed, indeed, that it did not come straight on towards us; for the city, that is to say, within the walls, was indifferent[1] healthy still; nor was it got then very much over the water into Southwark: for though there died that week 1268 of all distempers, whereof it might be supposed above nine hundred died of the plague; yet there was but twenty-eight in the whole city, within the walls, and but nineteen in Southwark, Lambeth parish included; whereas in the parishes of St. Giles, and St. Martin's in the Fields alone, there died four hundred and twenty-one.

But we perceived the infection kept chiefly in the out parishes, which being very populous, and fuller also of poor, the distemper found more to prey upon than in the city, as I shall observe afterward; we perceived, I say, the distemper to draw our way, viz., by the parishes of Clerkenwell, Cripplegate, Shoreditch, and Bishopsgate; which last two parishes joining to Aldgate, Whitechapel, and Stepney, the infection came at length to spread its utmost rage and violence in those parts, even when it abated at the western parishes where it began.

---

[1] Fairly.

It was very strange to observe, that in this particular week, from the 4th to the 11th of July, when, as I have observed, there died near four hundred of the plague in the two parishes of St. Martin's and St. Giles's in the Fields only, there died in the parish of Aldgate but four, in the parish of Whitechapel three, in the parish of Stepney but one.

Likewise in the next week, from the 11th of July to the 18th, when the week's bill was 1761, yet there died no more of the plague, on the whole Southwark side of the water, than sixteen.

But this face of things soon changed, and it began to thicken in Cripplegate parish especially, and in Clerkenwell; so that by the second week in August, Cripplegate parish alone buried eight hundred and eighty-six, and Clerkenwell one hundred and fifty-five; of the first, eight hundred and fifty might well be reckoned to die of the plague; and of the last, the bill itself said, one hundred and forty-five were of the plague.

During the month of July, and while, as I have observed, our part of the town seemed to be spared in comparison of[1] the west part, I went ordinarily about the streets, as my business required, and particularly went generally once in a day, or in two days, into the city, to my brother's house, which he had given me charge of, and to see it was safe; and having the key in my pocket, I used to go into the house, and over most of the rooms, to

[1] With.

see that all was well; for though it be something wonderful to tell, that any should have hearts so hardened, in the midst of such a calamity, as to rob and steal; yet certain it is that all sorts of villanies, and even levities and debaucheries, were then practised in the town, as openly as ever, I will not say quite as frequently, because the number of people were[1] many ways[2] lessened.

But the city itself began now to be visited too, I mean within the walls; but the number of people there were, indeed, extremely lessened, by so great a multitude having been gone[3] into the country; and even all this month of July, they continued to flee, though not in such multitudes as formerly. In August, indeed, they fled in such a manner that I began to think there would be really none but magistrates and servants left in the city.

As they fled now out of the city, so I should observe that the court removed early, viz., in the month of June, and went to Oxford, where it pleased God to preserve them; and the distemper did not, as I heard of, so much as touch them; for which I cannot say that I ever saw they showed any great token of thankfulness, and hardly anything of reformation, though they did not want being told that their crying vices might, without breach of charity, be said to have gone far, in bringing that terrible judgment upon the whole nation.[4]

The face of London was now indeed strangely altered; I mean the whole mass of buildings, city, liberties, suburbs, Westminster, Southwark, and altogether; for, as to the particular part called the city, or within the walls, that was not yet much infected; but, in the whole,[5] the face of things, I say, was much altered; sorrow and sadness sat upon every face, and though some part[6] were not yet overwhelmed, yet all looked deeply concerned; and as we saw it[1] apparently coming on, so every one looked on himself, and his family, as in the utmost danger: were it possible to represent those times exactly, to those that did not see them, and give the reader[2] due ideas of the horror that everywhere presented itself, it must[3] make just impressions upon their minds, and fill them with surprise. London might well be said to be all in tears; the mourners did not go about the streets,[4] indeed, for nobody put on black, or made a formal dress of mourning for their[5] nearest friends; but the voice of mourning was truly heard in the streets; the shrieks of women and children at the windows and doors of their houses, where their nearest relations were, perhaps, dying or just dead, were so frequent to be heard, as we passed the streets, that it was enough to pierce the stoutest heart in the world to hear them. Tears and lamentations were seen almost in every house, especially in the first part of the visitation; for towards the latter end men's hearts were hardened, and death was so always[6] before their eyes that they did not so much concern themselves for the loss of their friends, expecting that themselves[7] should be summoned the next hour.

---

[1] Was.

[2] In many ways.

[3] Having gone.

[4] The court of Charles the Second was noted for its levity and licentiousness.

[5] The whole mass.

[6] Used collectively.

Business led me out sometimes to the other end of the town, even when the sickness was chiefly there; and as the thing was new to me, as well as to everybody else, it was a most surprising thing to see those streets, which were usually so thronged, now grown desolate, and so few people to be seen in them, that if I had been a stranger, and at a loss for my way, I might sometimes have gone the length of a whole street, I mean of the by-streets, and see[8] nobody to direct me, except watchmen set at the doors of such houses as were shut up; of which I shall speak presently.

One day, being at that part of the town, on some special business, curiosity led me to observe things more than usually; and indeed I walked a great way where I had no

[1] The plague. [2] Readers. [3] Would. [4] See *Ecclesiastes* xii. 5.
[5] His. [6] Continually. [7] They themselves. [8] Seen.

business;[1] I went up Holborn, and there the street was full of people; but they walked in the middle of the great street, neither on one side or other,[2] because, as I suppose, they would not mingle with anybody that came out of houses, or meet with smells and scents from houses that might be infected.

The inns of court[3] were all shut up, nor were very many of the lawyers in the Temple, or Lincoln's Inn, or Gray's Inn, to be seen there. Everybody was at peace, there was no occasion for lawyers; besides, it being in the time of the vacation too, they were generally gone into the country. Whole rows of houses in some places, were shut close up, the inhabitants all fled, and only a watchman or two left.

When I speak of rows of houses being shut up, I do not mean shut up by the magistrates; but that great numbers of persons followed the court,[4] by the necessity of their employments, and other dependencies; and as others retired, really frighted with the distemper, it was a mere[5] desolating of some of the streets: but the fright was not yet near so great in the city, abstractedly so called;[6] and particularly because, though they[7] were at first in a most inexpressible consternation, yet, as I have observed, that the distemper intermitted often at first, so they were as it were alarmed, and unalarmed again, and this several times, till it began to be familiar to them; and that even when it appeared violent, yet seeing it did not presently spread into the city, or the east or south parts, the people began to take courage, and to be, as I may say, a little hardened. It is true, a vast many[8] people fled, as I have observed; yet they were chiefly from the west end of the town, and from that we call the heart of the city, that is to say, among the

[1] No reason for going there.

[2] Nor the other.

[3] The Inns of Court are three ancient legal bodies, in London, which have the exclusive right of instructing candidates for the bar and of admitting them to practice. The name is also applied to the premises occupied by these bodies.

[4] The royal court.

[5] Complete.

[6] The city proper.

[7] The inhabitants.

[8] Not a modern idiom.

wealthiest of the people; and such persons as were unincumbered with trades and business. But of the rest, the generality stayed, and seemed to abide the worst; so that in the place we call the liberties, and in the suburbs, in Southwark, and in the east part, such as Wapping, Ratcliff, Stepney, Rotherhithe, and the like, the people generally stayed, except here and there a few wealthy families, who, as above, did not depend upon their business.

It must not be forgot here, that the city and suburbs were prodigiously full of people[1] at the time of this visitation, I mean at the time that it began; for though I have lived to see a farther increase, and mighty throngs of people settling in London, more than ever, yet we had always a notion that numbers of people, which, the wars being over, the armies disbanded, and the royal family and the monarchy being restored,[2] had flocked to London to settle in business, or to depend upon and attend the court for rewards of services, preferments,[3] and the like, was[4] such, that the town was computed to have in it above a hundred thousand people more than ever it held before; nay, some took upon them to say, it had twice as many, because all the ruined families of the royal party flocked hither; all the soldiers set up trades here, and abundance of families settled here; again, the court brought with it a great flux[5] of pride and new fashions; all people were gay and luxurious, and the joy of the restoration had brought a vast many families to London.

But I must go back again to the beginning of this surprising time; while the fears of the people were young, they were increased strangely by several odd accidents, which put altogether, it was really a wonder the whole body of the people did not rise as one man and abandon their dwellings, leaving the place as a space of ground designed by heaven for an Akeldama,[1] doomed to be destroyed from the face of the earth, and that all that would be found in it would perish with it. I shall name but a few of these things; but sure they were so many, and so many wizards and cunning[2] people propagating them, that I have often wondered there was any (women especially) left behind.

---

[1] For statements concerning the population of London at this time, see Macaulay's History.

[2] The Stuart dynasty was restored in 1660, in the person of Charles II.

[3] Promotions, particularly in the church. [4] Were. [5] Influx.

In the first place, a blazing star or comet appeared for several months before the plague, as there did, the year after, another, a little before the fire;[3] the old women, and the phlegmatic[4] hypochondriac[5] part of the other sex, whom I could almost call old women too, remarked, especially afterward, though not till both those judgments were over, that those two comets passed directly over the city, and that[6] so very near the houses, that it was plain they imported something peculiar to the city alone. That[7] the comet before the pestilence was of a faint, dull, languid colour, and its motion very heavy, solemn, and slow; but that the comet before the fire was bright and sparkling, or, as others said, flaming, and its motion swift and furious, and that, accordingly, one foretold a heavy judgment, slow but severe, terrible, and frightful, as was the plague. But the other foretold a stroke, sudden, swift, and fiery, as was the conflagration; nay, so particular some people were, that as they looked upon that comet preceding the fire, they fancied that they not only saw it pass swiftly and fiercely, and could perceive the motion with their eye, but even they heard it, that it made a rushing mighty noise, fierce and terrible, though at a distance, and but just perceivable.

---

[1] Aceldama. See *St. Matthew* xxvii. 8; *Acts* i. 19.

[2] Having knowledge of magic.

[3] The great fire of 1666.

[4] Sluggish.

[5] Affected by a marked depression of spirits. The two adjectives contradict each other. The latter makes the best sense.

[6] *I.e.*, at that or in addition to that.

[7] This sentence is syntactically a clause of the preceding sentence.

I saw both these stars, and, I must confess, had had so much of the common notion of such things in my head, that I was apt to look upon them as the forerunners and warnings of God's judgments, and especially when[1] the plague had followed the first, I yet saw another of the like kind, I could not but say, God had not yet sufficiently scourged the city.

The apprehensions of the people were likewise strangely increased by the error of the times, in which, I think, the people, from what principle I cannot imagine, were more addicted to prophecies, and astrological conjurations,[2] dreams, and old wives' tales, than ever they were before or since: whether this unhappy temper was originally raised by the follies of some people who got money by it, that is to say, by printing predictions and prognostications,[3] I know not, but certain it is, books frighted them terribly; such as Lily's "Almanack," Gadbury's "Astrological Predictions," "Poor Robin's Almanack,"[4] and the like; also several pretended religious books, one entitled, "Come out of Her, my People, lest ye be Partaker of her Plagues;"[5] another called, "Fair Warning;" another, "Britain's Remembrancer," and many such; all, or most part of which, foretold, directly or covertly, the ruin of the city; nay, some were so enthusiastically bold as to run about the streets with their oral predictions, pretending they were sent to preach to the city; and one in particular, who, like Jonah to Nineveh, cried in the streets, "Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed."[6] I will not be positive whether he said "yet forty days," or "yet a few days." Another ran about naked, except a pair of drawers about his waist, crying day and night, like a man that Josephus mentions, who cried, "Woe to Jerusalem!" a little before the destruction of that city: so this poor naked creature cried, "O! the great, and the dreadful God!" and said no more, but repeated those words continually, with a voice and countenance full of horror, a swift pace, and nobody could ever find him to stop, or rest, or take any sustenance, at least that ever I could hear of. I met this poor creature several times in the streets, and would have spoke to him, but he would not enter into speech with me, or any one else; but kept on his dismal cries continually.

---

[1] Insert "after."

[2] The invoking of the powers governing the stars.

[3] The two words scarcely differ in meaning.

[4] More or less well-known astrological almanacs of the time.

[5] *Revelation* xviii. 4.

[6] *Jonah* iii. 4.

These things terrified the people to the last degree; and especially when two or three times, as I have mentioned already, they found one or two in the bills dead of the plague at St. Giles's.

Next to these public things were the dreams of old women; or, I should say, the interpretation of old women upon other people's dreams; and these put abundance of people even out of their wits. Some heard voices warning them to be gone, for that there would be such a plague in London so that the living would not be able to bury the dead; others saw apparitions in the air, and I must be allowed to say of both, I hope without breach of charity, that they heard voices that never spake, and saw sights that never appeared; but the imagination of the people was really turned wayward and possessed; and no wonder if they who were poring continually at the clouds, saw shapes and figures, representations and appearances, which had nothing in them but air and vapour. Here they told us they saw a flaming sword held in a hand, coming out of a cloud, with a point hanging directly over the city. There they saw hearses and coffins in the air carrying[1] to be buried. And there again, heaps of dead bodies lying unburied and the like; just as the imagination of the poor terrified people furnished them with matter to work upon.

> So hypochondriac fancies represent
> Ships, armies, battles in the firmament;

---

[1] An old idiom. We should say, "being carried."

Till steady eyes the exhalations solve,
And all to its first matter, cloud, resolve.

I could fill this account with the strange relations such people give every day of what they have seen; and every one was so positive of their[1] having seen what they pretended to see, that there was no contradicting them, without breach of friendship, or being accounted rude and unmannerly on the one hand, and profane[2] and impenetrable[3] on the other. One time before the plague was begun, otherwise than as I have said,[4] in St. Giles's, I think it was in March, seeing a crowd of people in the street, I joined with them to satisfy my curiosity, and found them all staring up into the air to see what a woman told them appeared plain to her, which was an angel clothed in white, with a fiery sword in his hand, waving it or brandishing it over his head. She described every part of the figure to the life, showed them the motion and the form, and the poor people came into it so eagerly and with so much readiness: "Yes! I see it all plainly," says one; "there's the sword as plain as can be;" another saw the angel; one saw his very face, and cried out, "What a glorious creature he was!" One saw one thing, and one another. I looked as earnestly as the rest, but, perhaps, not with so much willingness to be imposed upon; and I said, indeed, that I could see nothing but a white cloud, bright on one side, by the shining of the sun upon the other part. The woman endeavoured to show it me, but could not make me confess that I saw it, which, indeed, if I had, I must have lied: but the woman, turning to me, looked me in the face, and fancied I laughed, in which her imagination deceived her too, for I really did not laugh, but was seriously reflecting how the poor people were terrified by the force of their own imagination. However, she turned to me, called me profane fellow, and a scoffer, told me that it was a time of God's anger, and dreadful judgments were approaching, and that despisers, such as I, should wander and perish.

---

[1] The pronouns referring to "every one" should strictly be in the singular number.

[2] Treating sacred things (here warnings from heaven) lightly.

[3] Insensible.

[4] As I have elsewhere said.

The people about her seemed disgusted as well as she, and I found there was no persuading them that I did not laugh at them, and that I should be rather mobbed by them than be able to undeceive them. So I left them, and this appearance passed for as real as the blazing star itself.

Another encounter I had in the open day also; and this was in going through a narrow passage from Petty France into Bishopsgate Churchyard, by a row of almshouses; there are two churchyards to Bishopsgate Church or parish: one we go over to pass from the place called Petty France into Bishopsgate Street, coming out just by the church door; the other is on the side of the narrow passage where the almshouses are on the left, and a dwarf wall with a palisade on it on the right hand, and the city wall on the other side more to the right.

In this narrow passage stands a man looking through the palisades into the burying-place, and as many people as the narrowness of the place would admit to stop without hindering the passage of others, and he was talking mighty eagerly to them, and pointing now to one place, then to another, and affirming that he saw a ghost walking upon such a gravestone there; he described the shape, the posture, and the movement of it so exactly, that it was the greatest amazement to him in the world that everybody did not see it as well as he. On a sudden he would cry, "There it is! Now it comes this way!" then, "'Tis turned back!" till at length he persuaded the people into so firm a belief of it, that one fancied he saw it; and thus he came every day making a strange hubbub, considering it was so narrow a passage, till Bishopsgate clock struck eleven, and then the ghost would seem to start, and, as if he were called away, disappeared on a sudden.

I looked earnestly every way and at the very moment that this man directed, but could not see the least appearance of anything, but so positive was this poor man that he gave them vapours [1] in abundance, and sent them away trembling and frightened, till at length few people that knew of it cared to go through that passage, and hardly anybody by night on any account whatever.

This ghost, as the poor man affirmed, made signs to the houses, and to the ground, and to the people, plainly intimating, or else they so understanding it, that abundance of people should come to be buried in that churchyard, as indeed happened, but then [2] he saw such aspects, I must acknowledge I never believed, nor could I see anything of it myself, though I looked most earnestly to see it if possible.

Some endeavours were used to suppress the printing of such books as terrified the people, and to frighten the dispersers [3] of them, some of whom were taken up, but nothing done in it, as I am informed, the government being unwilling to exasperate the people, who were, as I may say, all out of their wits already.

Neither can I acquit those ministers, that, in their sermons, rather sunk than lifted up the hearts of their hearers; many of them, I doubt not, did it for the strengthening the resolution of the people, and especially for quickening them to repentance; but it certainly answered not their end, at least not in proportion to the injury it did another way.

One mischief always introduces another; these terrors and apprehensions of the people led them to a thousand weak, foolish, and wicked things, which they wanted not a sort of people really wicked to encourage them to,[4] and this was running about to fortune-tellers, cunning men, and astrologers, to know their fortunes, or, as it is vulgarly expressed, to have their fortunes told them, their nativities [1] calculated, and the like, and this folly presently made the town swarm with a wicked generation of pretenders to magic, to the black art, as they called it, and I know not what; nay, to a thousand worse dealings with the devil than they were really guilty of. and this trade grew so open and so generally practised, that it became common to have signs and inscriptions set up at doors, "Here lives a fortune-teller;" "Here lives an astrologer;" "Here you may have your nativity calculated;" and the like; and Friar Bacon's brazen-head,[2] which was the usual sign of these people's dwellings, was to be seen almost in every street, or else the sign of Mother Shipton,[3] or of Merlin's head,[4] and the like.

---

[1] Great depression of spirits. A term frequently used in the eighteenth century.

[2] Probably a misprint for "that."

[3] Those who sold them.

[4] *I.e.*, to encourage them in which there was not wanting a sort of people who were really wicked.

With what blind, absurd, and ridiculous stuff these oracles of the devil pleased and satisfied the people, I really know not, but certain it is, that innumerable attendants [5] crowded about their doors every day; and if but a grave fellow in a velvet jacket, a band,[6] and a black cloak, which was the habit those quack-conjurors generally went in, was but seen in the streets, the people would follow them [7] in crowds and ask them questions as they went along.

[1] To ascertain under what special influence of the heavens they were born. This could be discovered only by calculating the position of the planets, etc., at the times of their births.

[2] Popular legend transformed Roger Bacon, the famous Franciscan monk of the thirteenth century, who was extraordinarily versed, for his time, in scientific matters, particularly mechanics and optics, into a great magician. It was said that he constructed a brazen head, which answered all questions he asked of it.

[3] A half-mythical English prophetess of the sixteenth century.

[4] In English legend Merlin was the famous magician of King Arthur's time. See Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

[5] Customers or patients.

[6] A lace ruff, giving to the dress a slightly antique and ceremonial air.

[7] Him.

The case of poor servants was very dismal, as I shall have occasion to mention again, by and by; for it was apparent a prodigious number of them would be turned away, and it was so, and of them abundance perished, and particularly those whom these false prophets flattered with hopes that they should be kept in their services and carried with their masters and mistresses into the country; and had not public charity provided for these poor creatures, whose number was exceeding great, and in all cases of this nature must be so, they would have been in the worst condition of any people in the city.

These things agitated the minds of the common people for many months while the first apprehensions were upon them, and while the plague was not, as I may say, yet broken out; but I must also not forget that the more serious part of the inhabitants behaved after another manner; the government encouraged their devotion, and appointed public prayers and days of fasting and humiliation, to make public confession of sin, and implore the mercy of God, to avert the dreadful judgment which hangs over their heads; and, it is not to be expressed with what alacrity the people of all persuasions embraced the occasion, how they flocked to the churches and meetings, and they were all so thronged that there was often no coming near, even to the very doors of the largest churches: also, there were daily prayers appointed morning and evening at several churches, and days of private praying at other places, at all which the people attended, I say, with an uncommon devotion; several private families also, as well of one opinion[1] as another, kept family fasts, to which they admitted their near relations only; so that, in a word, those people who were really serious and religious applied themselves in a truly Christian manner to the proper work of repentance and humiliation, as a Christian people ought to do.

[1] Sect.

Again, the public showed that they would bear their share in these things; the very court, which was then gay and luxurious, put on a face of just concern for the public danger. All the plays and interludes, which, after the manner of the French court, had been set up and began to increase among us, were forbid[1] to act; the gaming-tables, public dancing rooms, and music houses, which multiplied and began to debauch the manners of the people, were shut up and suppressed; and the jack-puddings,[2] merry-andrews,[2] puppet-shows, rope-dancers, and such-like doings, which had bewitched the common people, shut their shops, finding indeed no trade, for the minds of the people were agitated with other things, and a kind of sadness and horror at these things sat upon the countenances even of the common people; death was before their eyes, and everybody began to think of their graves,[3] not of mirth and diversions.

But even these wholesome reflections, which, rightly managed, would have most happily led the people to fall upon their knees, make confession of their sins, and look up to their merciful Saviour for pardon, imploring his compassion on them in such a time of their distress, by which we might have been as a second Nineveh,[4] had a quite contrary extreme in the common people: who, ignorant and stupid in their reflections, as they were brutishly wicked and thoughtless before, were now led by their fright to extremes of folly; and, as I said before, that they ran to conjurers and witches and all sorts of deceivers, to know what should become of them, who fed their fears and kept them always alarmed and awake, on purpose to delude them and pick their pockets, so they were as mad upon their running after quacks and mountebanks and every practising old woman for medicines and remedies, storing themselves with such multitudes of pills, potions, and preservatives, as they were called, that they not only spent their money but poisoned themselves beforehand for fear of the poison of the infection, and prepared their bodies for the plague instead of preserving them against it. On the other hand, it was incredible, and scarce to be imagined, how the posts of houses and corners of streets were plastered over with doctors' bills, and papers of ignorant fellows quacking[1] and tampering[2] in[3] physic,[4] and inviting people to come to them for remedies, which was generally set off with such flourishes as these, viz., INFALLIBLE preventitive pills against the plague. NEVER-FAILING preservatives against the infection. SOVEREIGN cordials against the corruption of air. EXACT regulations for the conduct of the body in case of infection. Antipestilential pills. INCOMPARABLE drink against the plague, never found out before. An UNIVERSAL remedy for the plague. The ONLY TRUE plague-water. The ROYAL ANTIDOTE against all kinds of infection: and such a number more that I cannot reckon[5] up, and, if[6] I could, would fill a book of themselves to set them down.

---

[1] Forbidden

[2] Clowns.

[3] His grave.

[4] See *Jonah* iii. 5–10.

Others set up bills to summon people to their lodgings for direction and advice in the case of infection; these had specious titles also, such as these:

> An eminent High Dutch[7] physician, newly come over from Holland, where he resided during all the time of the great plague, last year, in Amsterdam, and cured multitudes of people that actually had the plague upon them.
>
> An Italian gentlewoman just arrived from Naples, having a choice secret to prevent infection, which she found out by her great experience, and did wonderful cures with it in the late plague there, wherein there died 20,000 in one day.

---

[1] Playing the quack. [2] Meddling. [3] With.
[4] Medicine. [5] Reckon them. [6] Which, if.
[7] From High or Central Germany, in distinction from the lowlands of Holland, and adjoining regions.

An ancient gentlewoman having practised with great success in the late plague in this city, anno[1] 1636, gives her advice only to the female sex. To be spoken with, etc.

An experienced physician, who has long studied the doctrine of antidotes against all sorts of poison and infection, has, after forty years' practice, arrived at such skill as may, with God's blessing, direct persons how to prevent being touched by any contagious distemper whatsoever. He directs the poor gratis.

I take notice of these by way of specimen ; I could give you two or three dozen of the like, and yet have abundance left behind. It is sufficient from these to apprise any one of the humour of those times, and how a set of thieves and pickpockets not only robbed and cheated the poor people of their money, but poisoned their bodies with odious and fatal preparations ; some with mercury, and some with other things as bad, perfectly remote from the thing pretended to, and rather hurtful than serviceable to the body in case an infection followed.

I cannot omit a subtlety of one of those quack operators with which he gulled the poor people to crowd about him, but did nothing for them without money. He had, it seems, added to his bills, which he gave out in the streets, this advertisement in capital letters, viz., "He gives advice to the poor for nothing."

Abundance of people came to him accordingly, to whom he made a great many fine speeches, examined them of the state of their health, and of the constitution of their bodies, and told them many good things to do which were of no great moment ; but the issue and conclusion of all was that he had a preparation, which, if they took such a quantity of, every morning, he would pawn his life that they should never have the plague, no, though they lived in the house with people that were infected. This made the people all resolve to have it, but then, the price of that was so much, I think it was half-a-crown;[1] "But, sir," says one poor woman, "I am a poor almswoman,[2] and am kept by the parish, and your bills say, you give the poor your help for nothing." "Ay, good woman," says the doctor, "so I do, as I published there; I give my advice, but not my physic!" "Alas, sir," says she, "that is a snare laid for the poor then, for you give them your advice for nothing; that is to say, you advise them, gratis, to buy your physic for their money; so does every shopkeeper with his wares." Here the woman began to give him ill words, and stood at his door all that day, telling her tale to all the people that came, till the doctor, finding she turned away his customers, was obliged to call her up-stairs again and give her his box of physic for nothing, which, perhaps too, was good for nothing when she had it.

---

[1] In the year.

But, to return to the people, whose confusions fitted them to be imposed upon by all sorts of pretenders and by every mountebank. There is no doubt but these quacking sort of fellows raised great gains out of the miserable people, for we daily found the crowds that ran after them were infinitely greater, and their doors were more thronged than those of Dr. Brooks, Dr. Upton, Dr. Hodges, Dr. Berwick, or any, though the most famous men of the time; and I was told that some of them got 5*l.*[3] a day by their physic.

But there was still another madness beyond all this, which may serve to give an idea of the distracted humour of the poor people at that time, and this was their following a worse sort of deceivers than any of these, for these petty thieves only deluded them to pick their pockets and get their money, in which their wickedness, whatever it was, lay chiefly on the side of the deceiver's deceiving, not upon the deceived; but in this part I am going to mention, it lay chiefly in the people deceived, or equally in both; and this was in wearing charms, philters,[1] exorcisms,[2] amulets,[3] and I know not what preparations to fortify the body against the plague, as if the plague was not the hand of God, but a kind of a possession of an evil spirit, and it was to be kept off with crossings, signs of the zodiac,[4] papers tied up with so many knots, and certain words or figures written on them, as particularly the word Abracadabra,[5] formed in triangle or pyramid, thus:

---

[1] About sixty cents; then equivalent in purchasing power to several dollars now.

[2] Dependent on charity.

[3] About twenty-five dollars.

A B R A C A D A B R A
A B R A C A D A B R
A B R A C A D A B
A B R A C A D A
A B R A C A D
A B R A C A
A B R A C
A B R A
A B R
A B
A

Others had the Jesuits'[6] mark in a cross:[7]
I H
S

Others had nothing but this mark, thus:
+

I might spend a great deal of my time in exclamations against the follies, and indeed the wickednesses of those things, in a time of such danger, in a matter of such consequence as this of a national infection; but my memorandums of these things relate rather to take notice of the fact, and mention only that it was so. How the poor people found the insufficiency of those things, and how many of them were afterwards carried away in the dead-carts, and thrown into the common graves of every parish with these hellish charms and trumpery hanging about their necks, remains to be spoken of as we go along.

---

[1] Love-potions; here in the sense of liquids with magic powers.

[2] Forms of words used to drive out evil spirits.

[3] Charms worn for protection against ill-luck or witchcraft.

[4] Astrological signs.

[5] The letters in the triangle, it will be noticed can be read in several directions so as to form the meaningless word Abracadabra, much used in mediæval incantations.

[6] Members of the "Company of Jesus," an order devoted to the upholding and extension of the Roman Catholic Church, are usually known as Jesuits.

[7] Usually interpreted, *Iesus Hominum Salvator*, "Jesus, Saviour of Men,"

All this was the effect of the hurry the people were in, after the first notion of the plague being at hand was among them, and which may be said to be from about Michaelmas,[1] 1664, but more particularly after the two men died in St. Giles's in the beginning of December; and again after another alarm in February, for when the plague evidently spread itself, they soon began to see the folly of trusting to these unperforming[2] creatures, who had gulled them of their money, and then their fears worked another way, namely, to amazement and stupidity, not knowing what course to take or what to do, either to help or to relieve themselves, but they ran about from one neighbour's house to another, and even in the streets, from one door to another, with repeated cries of "Lord have mercy upon us, what shall we do?"

I am supposing now the plague to have begun, as I have said, and that the magistrates began to take the condition of the people into their serious consideration; what they did as to the regulation of the inhabitants, and of infected families I shall speak to[3] by itself; but, as to the affair of health, it is proper to mention here, my having[4] seen the foolish humour of the people in running after quacks, mountebanks, wizards, and fortune-tellers, which they did as above even to madness. The lord mayor, a very sober and religious gentleman, appointed physicians and surgeons for the relief of the poor, I mean the diseased poor, and, in particular, ordered the college of physicians to publish directions for cheap remedies for the poor in all the circumstances of the distemper. This, indeed, was one of the most charitable and judicious things that could be done at that time, for this drove the people from haunting the doors of every disperser of bills,[1] and from taking down blindly and without consideration, poison for physic, and death instead of life.

---

[1] The feast of St. Michael, September 29th.

[2] *I.e.*, not performing what they had promised.

[3] Of.

[4] Omit "my."

This direction of the physicians was done by a consultation of the whole college,[2] and as it was particularly calculated for the use of the poor, and for cheap medicines, it was made public, so that everybody might see it, and copies were given gratis to all that desired it: but as it is public and to be seen on all occasions, I need not give the reader of this the trouble of it.

It remains to be mentioned now what public measures were taken by the magistrates for the general safety, and to prevent the spreading of the distemper when it broke out; I shall have frequent occasion to speak of the prudence of the magistrates, their charity, their vigilance for the poor, and for preserving good order, furnishing provisions, and the like, when the plague was increased as it afterwards was. But I am now upon the order and regulations which they published for the government of infected families.

I mentioned above shutting of houses up, and it is needful to say something particularly to[3] that; for this part of the history of the plague is very melancholy; but the most grievous story must be told.

About June, the lord mayor of London and the court of aldermen, as I have said, began more particularly to concern themselves for the regulation of the city.

The justices of the peace for Middlesex,[4] by direction of the secretary of state, had begun to shut up houses in the parishes of St. Giles's in the Fields, St. Martin's, St. Clement's Danes, etc., and it was with good success, for in several streets where the plague broke out, upon strict guarding the houses that were infected, and taking care to bury those that died as soon as they were known to be dead, the plague ceased in those streets. It was also observed that the plague decreased sooner in those parishes after they had been visited to the full, than it did in the parishes of Bishopsgate, Shoreditch, Aldgate, Whitechapel, Stepney, and others; the early care taken in that manner being a great means to the putting a check to it.

---

[1] Every one who circulated advertisements.

[2] The corporate body of licensed practitioners.

[3] Something particular in regard to.

[4] Almost all London is included in the county of Middlesex.

This shutting up of the houses was a method first taken, as I understand, in the plague which happened in 1603, at the coming of King James the I. to the crown, and the power of shutting people up in their own houses was granted by act of parliament, entitled, "An act for the charitable relief and ordering of persons infected with plague." On which act of parliament the lord mayor and aldermen of the city of London founded the order they made at this time, and which took place[1] the 1st of July, 1665, when the numbers of infected within the city were but few, the last bill for the ninety-two parishes being but four, and some houses having been shut up in the city, and some people being removed to the pesthouse beyond Bunhill Fields, in the way to Islington; I say, by these means, when there died near one thousand a week in the whole, the number in the city was but twenty-eight; and the city was preserved more healthy in proportion than any other place all the time of the infection.

These orders of my lord mayor's were published, as I have said, the latter end of June, and took place from the 1st of July, and were as follow, viz.:

---

[1] Effect.

ORDERS CONCEIVED AND PUBLISHED BY THE LORD MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF LONDON, CONCERNING THE INFECTION OF THE PLAGUE; 1665.

WHEREAS in the reign of our late sovereign King James, of happy memory, an act was made for the charitable relief and ordering of persons infected with the plague: whereby authority was given to justices of the peace, mayors, bailiffs,[1] and other head officers, to appoint within their several limits examiners, searchers, watchmen, keepers, and buriers, for the persons and places infected, and to minister[2] unto them oaths for the performance of their offices; and the same statute did also authorise the giving of their directions, as unto them for other present necessity should seem good in their discretions.[3] It is now upon special consideration thought very expedient for preventing and avoiding of infection of sickness (if it shall please Almighty God), that these officers following be appointed, and these orders hereafter duly observed.

Examiners to be appointed to every Parish.

First, it is thought requisite, and so ordered, that in every parish there be one, two, or more persons of good sort and credit chosen by the alderman, his deputy, and common-council of every ward, by the name of examiners, to continue in that office for the space of two months at least: and, if any fit person so appointed shall refuse to undertake the same, the said parties so refusing to be committed to prison until they shall conform themselves accordingly.

The Examiner's Office.

That these examiners be sworn by the alderman to inquire and learn from time to time what houses in every parish be visited, and what persons be sick, and of what diseases, as near as they can inform themselves, and, upon doubt in that case, to command restraint of access[1] until it appear what the disease shall prove; and if they find any person sick of the infection, to give order to the constable that the house be shut up; and if the constable shall be found remiss and negligent, to give notice thereof to the alderman of the ward.

---

[1] Sheriffs.

[2] Administer.

[3] *I.e.*, for the justices, etc., to give such directions to these executive officers as should seem good to them for dealing with additional present necessities.

Watchmen.

That to every infected house there be appointed two watchmen, one for every day, and the other for the night, and that these watchmen have a special care that no person go in or out of such infected houses whereof they have the charge, upon pain of severe punishment. And the said watchmen do such farther offices as the sick house shall need and require; and if the watchman be sent upon any business, to lock up the house and take the key with him; and the watchman by day to attend until ten o'clock at night, and the watchman by night until six in the morning.

Searchers.

That there be a special care to appoint women-searchers in every parish, such as are of honest reputation, and of the best sort as can be got in this kind; and these to be sworn to make due search and true report to the utmost of their knowledge, whether the persons whose bodies they are appointed to search do die of the infection, or of what other diseases, as near as they can; and that the physicians who shall be appointed for the cure and prevention of the infection, do call before them the said searchers, who are, or shall be appointed for the several parishes under their respective cares, to the end they may consider whether they be fitly qualified for that employment, and charge

[1] That access to the house be cut off.

them from time to time, as they shall see cause, if they appear defective in their duties.

That no searcher, during this time of visitation, be permitted to use[1] any public work or employment, or keep a shop or stall, or be employed as a laundress, or in any other common employment whatsoever.

Chirurgeons.[2]

For better assistance of the searchers, forasmuch as there has been heretofore great abuse in misreporting the disease, to the farther spreading of the infection, it is therefore ordered that there be chosen and appointed able and discreet chirurgeons besides those that do already belong to the pesthouse; amongst whom the city and liberties to be quartered[3] as they lie most apt and convenient, and every[4] of these to have one quarter for his limit; and the said chirurgeons in every of their limits to join with the searchers for the view of the body, to the end there may be a true report made of the disease.

And farther, that the said chirurgeons shall visit and search such like persons as shall either send for them, or be named and directed unto them by the examiners of every parish, and inform themselves of the disease of the said parties.

And, forasmuch as the said chirurgeons are to be sequestered from all other cures,[5] and kept only to this disease of the infection, it is ordered that every of the said chirurgeons shall have twelvepence a body searched by them, to be paid out of the goods of the party searched, if he be able, or otherwise by the parish.

---

[1] Hold.

[2] The older spelling (literally, "hand-workers" from the Greek) of "surgeons."

[3] Divided.

[4] Every one.

[5] Cares, duties.

Nurse-keepers.[1]

If any nurse-keeper shall remove herself out of any infected house before twenty-eight days after the decease of any person dying of the infection, the house to which the said nurse-keeper doth so remove herself shall be shut up until the said twenty-eight days shall be expired.

ORDERS CONCERNING INFECTED HOUSES, AND PERSONS SICK OF THE PLAGUE.

Notice to be given of the Sickness.

The master of every house as soon as any one in his house complaineth, either of botch,[2] or purple,[3] or swelling in any part of his body, or falleth otherwise dangerously sick without apparent cause of some other disease, shall give notice thereof to the examiner of health, within two hours after the said sign shall appear.

Sequestration of the Sick.

As soon as any man shall be found by this examiner, chirurgeon, or searcher, to be sick of the plague, he shall the same night be sequestered in the same house, and in case he be so sequestered, then, though he die not, the house wherein he sickened shall be shut up for a month after the use of the due preservatives taken by the rest.

Airing the Stuff.

For sequestration of the goods and stuff of the infection, their bedding, and apparel, and hangings of chambers must be well aired with fire, and such perfumes as are requisite, within the infected house, before they be taken again to use. This to be done by the appointment of the examiner.

---

[1] Nurses in charge of infected houses.

[2] A swelling on the skin.

[3] Purples, an affection of the skin marked by spots of livid red.

Shutting up of the House.

If any person shall visit any man known to be infected of the plague, or entereth willingly into any known infected house, being not allowed, the house wherein he inhabiteth shall be shut up for certain days by the examiner's direction.

None to be removed out of Infected Houses, but, etc.

Item,[1] That none be removed out of the house where he falleth sick of the infection, into any other house in the city (except it be to the pesthouse or a tent, or unto some such house, which the owner of the said house holdeth in his own hands, and occupieth by his own servants), and so as[2] security be given to the said parish whither such remove is made, that the attendance and charge[3] about the said visited persons shall be observed and charged[4] in all the particularities before expressed, without any cost of that parish to which any such remove shall happen to be made, and this remove to be done by night; and it shall be lawful to any person that hath two houses, to remove either his sound or his infected people to his spare house at his choice, so as if he send away first his sound, he do not after send thither the sick; nor again unto the sick the sound; and that the same which he sendeth be for one week, at the least, shut up, and secluded from company, for the fear of some infection at first not appearing.

Burial of the Dead.

That the burial of the dead by this visitation be at most convenient hours, always before sun-rising, or after sun-setting, with the privity[5] of the church-wardens,[6] or constable, and not otherwise; and that no neighbours nor friends be suffered to accompany the corpse to church, or to enter the house visited, upon pain of having his house shut up, or be imprisoned.

---

[1] Likewise. [2] Except. [3] Responsibility. [4] Looked to.

[5] Private knowledge and consent.

[6] The legal representatives of the church in secular affairs.

And, that no corpse dying of the infection shall be buried, or remain in any church in time of common prayer, sermon, or lecture.[1] And, that no children be suffered at time of burial of any corpse, in any church, churchyard, or burying-place, to come near the corpse, coffin, or grave ; and, that all graves shall be at least six feet deep.

And farther, all public assemblies at other burials are to be forborne during the continuance of this visitation.

No Infected Stuff to be uttered.[2]

That no clothes, stuff, bedding, or garments, be suffered to be carried or conveyed out of any infected houses, and that the criers and carriers abroad of bedding or old apparel to be sold or pawned, be utterly prohibited and restrained, and no brokers of bedding or old apparel be permitted to make any public show, or hang forth on their stalls, shopboards, or windows towards any street, lane, common-way, or passage, any old bedding or apparel to be sold, upon pain of imprisonment. And if any broker or other person shall buy any bedding, apparel, or other stuff out of any infected house, within two months after the infection hath been there, his house shall be shut up as infected, and so shall continue shut up twenty days at the least.

No Person to be conveyed out of any Infected House.

If any person visited do fortune[3] by negligent looking unto, or by any other means, to come or be conveyed from a place infected to any other place, the parish from whence such party hath come, or been conveyed, upon notice thereof given, shall, at their charge,[4] cause the said party so visited and escaped to be carried and brought back again by night, and the parties in this case offending to be punished at the direction of the alderman of the ward, and the house of the receiver of such visited person to be shut up for twenty days.

---

[1] Discourse. [2] Put into circulation. [3] Chance. [4] Injunction.

Every Visited House to be marked.

That every house visited be marked with a red cross of a foot long, in the middle of the door, evident to be seen, and with these usual printed words, that is to say, "Lord have mercy upon us," to be set close over the same cross, there to continue until lawful opening of the same house.

Every Visited House to be watched.

That the constables see every house shut up, and to be attended with watchmen, which may keep in, and minister necessaries to them at their own charges,[1] if they be able, or at the common charge if they be unable. The shutting up to be for the space of four weeks after all be whole.

That precise order be taken that the searchers, chirurgeons, keepers, and buriers are not to pass the streets without holding a red rod or wand of three foot in length in their hands, open and evident to be seen, and are not to go into any other house than into their own, or into that whereunto they are directed or sent for, but to forbear and abstain from company, especially when they have been lately used in any such business or attendance.

Inmates.

That where several inmates are in one and the same house, and any person in that house happens to be infected, no other person or family of such house shall be suffered to remove him or themselves without a certificate from the examiners of the health of that parish, or in default thereof, the house whither she or they remove shall be shut up as is in case of visitation.

---

[1] Expense.

Hackney-Coaches.

That care be taken of hackney-coachmen, that they may not, as some of them have been observed to do after carrying of infected persons to the pesthouse and other places, be admitted to common use till their coaches be well aired, and have stood unemployed by the space of five or six days after such service.

ORDERS FOR CLEANSING AND KEEPING OF THE STREETS SWEPT.

The Streets to be kept clean.

First, it is thought necessary and so ordered, that every householder do cause the street to be daily prepared before his door, and so to keep it clean swept all the week long.

That Rakers take it from out the Houses.

That the sweeping and filth of houses be daily carried away by the rakers, and that the raker shall give notice of his coming by the blowing of a horn, as hitherto hath been done.

Lay-stalls[1] to be made far off from the City.

That the lay-stalls be removed as far as may be out of the city and common passages, and that no nightman or other be suffered to empty a vault into any vault or garden near about the city.

Care to be had of unwholesome Fish or Flesh, and of musty Corn.

That special care be taken that no stinking fish, or unwholesome flesh, or musty corn, or other corrupt fruits, of what sort soever, be suffered to be sold about the city or any part of the same.

That the brewers and tippling-houses be looked unto for musty and unwholesome casks.

---

[1] Literally, "lay-places;" rubbish-heaps.

That no hogs, dogs, or cats, or tame pigeons, or conies,[1] be suffered to be kept within any part of the city, or any swine to be or stray in the streets or lanes, but that such swine be impounded by the beadle[2] or any other officer, and the owner punished according to the act of common-council, and that the dogs be killed by the dog-killers appointed for that purpose.

ORDERS CONCERNING LOOSE PERSONS AND IDLE ASSEMBLIES.

Beggars.

Forasmuch as nothing is more complained of than the multitude of rogues and wandering beggars that swarm about in every place about the city, being a great cause of the spreading of the infection, and will not be avoided[3] notwithstanding any orders that have been given to the contrary: it is therefore now ordered that such constables, and others whom this matter may any way concern, take special care that no wandering beggars be suffered in the streets of this city, in any fashion or manner whatsoever, upon the penalty provided by law to be duly and severely executed upon them.

Plays.

That all plays, bear-baitings,[4] games, singing of ballads, buckler-play,[5] or such like causes of assemblies of people be utterly prohibited, and the parties offending severely punished, by every alderman in his ward.

Feasting prohibited.

That all public feasting, and particularly by the companies[6] of this city, and dinners in taverns, ale-houses, and other places of public entertainment, be forborne till farther order and allowance, and that the money thereby spared be preserved, and employed for the benefit and relief of the poor visited with the infection.

---

[1] Rabbits.

[2] A subordinate parish officer.

[3] Cannot be prevented from swarming about the city.

[4] The favorite English amusement of setting large dogs on captive bears.

[5] Exhibitions of skill with swords and bucklers.

[6] The guilds.

Tippling-Houses.

That disorderly tippling in taverns, ale-houses, coffee-houses, and cellars, be severely looked unto as the common sin of the time, and greatest occasion of dispersing the plague. And that no company or person be suffered to remain or come into any tavern, ale-house, or coffee-house, to drink, after nine of the clock in the evening, according to the ancient law and custom of this city, upon the penalties ordained by law.

And for the better execution of these orders, and such other rules and directions as upon farther consideration shall be found needful, it is ordered and enjoined that the aldermen, deputies, and common-council-men shall meet together weekly, once, twice, thrice, or oftener, as cause shall require, at some one general place accustomed in their respective wards, being clear from infection of the plague, to consult how the said orders may be put in execution, not intending that any dwelling in or near places infected shall come to the said meeting while their coming may be doubtful. And the said aldermen, deputies, and common-council-men, in their several wards, may put in execution any other orders, that by them, at their said meetings, shall be conceived and devised for the preservation of his majesty's subjects from the infection.

Sir JOHN LAWRENCE, Lord Mayor.
Sir GEORGE WATERMAN, } Sheriffs.
Sir CHARLES DOE, }

I need not say that these orders extended only to such places as were within the lord mayor's jurisdiction; so it is requisite to observe, that the justices of peace, within those parishes and places as were called the hamlets and out-parts, took the same method : as I remember, the orders for shutting up of houses did not take place so soon on our side, because, as I said before, the plague did not reach to this eastern part of the town at least, nor begin to be violent till the beginning of August.—For example, the whole bill from the 11th to the 18th of July, was 1761, yet there died but seventy-one of the plague in all those parishes we call the Tower Hamlets ; and they were as follows :

Aldgate,	14		34		65
Stepney,	33	the next	58	and to the	76
Whitechapel,	21	week was	48	1st of Aug.	79
St. Kath. Tower,[1]	2	thus :	4	thus :	4
Trin. Minories,[2]	1		1		4
	71		145		228

It was indeed coming on amain, for the burials that same week were, in the next adjoining parishes, thus :

St. L.[3] Shoreditch	64	the next week	84	to the 1st	110
St. Bot. Bishopsg.[4]	65	prodigiously	105	of Aug.	116
St. Giles's Crippl.[5]	213	increased, as	431	thus :	554
	342		620		780

This shutting up of houses was at first counted a very cruel and unchristian method, and the poor people so confined made bitter lamentations ; complaints of the severity of it were also daily brought to my lord mayor, of houses causelessly, and some maliciously, shut up ; I cannot say but upon inquiry many that complained so loudly were found in a condition to be continued ; and others[6] again, inspection being made upon the sick person,[6] and the sickness not appearing infectious ; or, if uncertain, yet, on his being content to be carried to the pesthouse, was[6] released.

---

[1] St. Katherine's by the Tower.

[2] Trinity Minories.

[3] St. Luke's.

[4] St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate.

[5] Cripplegate.

[6] The syntax is somewhat confused.

As I went along Houndsditch one morning about eight o'clock, there was a great noise; it is true, indeed, there was not much crowd, because the people were not very free to gather together, or to stay long together when they were there, nor did I stay long there; but the outcry was loud enough to prompt my curiosity, and I called to one, who looked out of a window, and asked what was the matter?

A watchman, it seems, had been employed to keep his post at the door of a house which was infected, or said to be infected, and was shut up; he had been there all night, for two nights together, as he told his story, and the day watchman had been there one day, and was now come to relieve him; all this while no noise had been heard in the house, no light had been seen, they called for nothing, sent him of no errands, which used to be the chief business of the watchmen, neither had they given him any disturbance, as he said, from Monday afternoon, when he heard a great crying and screaming in the house, which, as he supposed, was occasioned by some of the family dying just at that time. It seems the night before, the dead-cart, as it was called, had been stopt there, and a servant-maid had been brought down to the door dead, and the buriers or bearers, as they were called, put her into the cart, wrapped only in a green rug, and carried her away.

The watchman had knocked at the door, it seems, when he heard that noise and crying, as above, and nobody answered a great while, but at last one looked out, and said, with an angry, quick tone, and yet a kind of crying voice, or a voice of one that was crying, "What d'ye want, that you make such a knocking?" He answered, "I am the watchman, how do you do? What is the matter?" The person answered, "What is that to you? Stop the dead-cart." This it seems, was about one o'clock; soon after, as the fellow said, he stopped the dead-cart, and then knocked again, but nobody answered; he continued knocking, and the bellman called out several times, "Bring out your dead ;" but nobody answered, till the man that drove the cart, being called to other houses, would stay no longer, and drove away.

The watchman knew not what to make of all this, so he let them alone till the morning-man, or day-watchman, as they called him, came to relieve him. Giving him an account of the particulars, they knocked at the door a great while, but nobody answered, and they observed that the window or casement, at which the person looked out who had answered before, continued open, being up two pair of stairs.

Upon this the two men, to satisfy their curiosity, got a long ladder, and one of them went up to the window, and looked into the room, where he saw a woman lying dead upon the floor, in a dismal manner, having no clothes on her but her shift ; but though he called aloud, and putting in his long staff, knocked hard on the floor, yet nobody stirred or answered, neither could he hear any noise in the house.

He came down again upon this and acquainted his fellow, who went up also, and finding it just so, they resolved to acquaint either the lord mayor, or some other magistrate of it, but did not offer to go in at the window. The magistrate, it seems, upon the information of the two men, ordered the house to be broke open, a constable and other persons being appointed to be present, that nothing might be plundered, and accordingly it was so done, when nobody was found in the house but that young woman, who, having been infected, and past recovery, the rest had left her to die by herself, and every one gone, having found some way to delude the watchman, and to get open the door, or get out at some back-door, or over the tops of the houses, so that he knew nothing of it ; and, as to those cries and shrieks which he heard, it was supposed they were the passionate cries of the family at this bitter parting, which to be sure, it was to them all, this being the sister to the mistress of the family. The man of the house, his wife, several children and servants, being all gone and fled, whether sick or sound, that I could never learn, nor, indeed, did I make much inquiry after it.

At another house, as I was informed, in the street next within Aldgate, a whole family was shut up and locked in, because the maid-servant was taken sick ; the master of the house had complained by his friends to the next[1] alderman, and to the lord mayor, and had consented to have the maid carried to the pesthouse, but was refused ; so the door was marked with a red cross, a padlock on the outside, as above, and a watchman set to keep the door, according to public order.

After the master of the house found there was no remedy, but that he, his wife, and his children were locked up with this poor distempered servant, he called to the watchman, and told him he must go then and fetch a nurse for them to attend this poor girl, for that it would be certain death to them all to oblige them to nurse her, and told him plainly that, if he would not do this, the maid would perish either[2] of the distemper, or be starved for want of food, for he was resolved none of his family should go near her, and she lay in the garret, four story[3] high, where she could not cry out, or call to anybody for help.

The watchman consented to that, and went and fetched a nurse, as he was appointed, and brought her to them the same evening ; during this interval, the master of the house took his opportunity to break a large hole through his shop into a bulk or stall, where formerly a cobbler had sat before or under his shop window ; but the tenant, as may be supposed, at such a dismal time as that, was dead or removed, and so he had the key in his own keeping ; having made his way into this stall, which he could not have done if the man had been at the door, the noise he was obliged to make being such as would have alarmed the watchman ; I say, having made his way into this stall, he sat still till the watchman returned with the nurse, and all the next day also ; but the night following, having contrived to send the watchman of another trifling errand, which, as I take it, was to an apothecary's for a plaster for the maid, which he was to stay for the making up, or some other such errand, that might secure his staying some time ; in that time he conveyed himself and all his family out of the house, and left the nurse and the watchman to bury the poor wench, that is, throw her into the cart, and take care of the house.

---

[1] Nearest.

[2] More strictly, "either perish."

[3] A loose idiom ; compare "three yoke of oxen."

Not far from the same place they blowed[1] up a watchman with gunpowder, and burnt the poor fellow dreadfully ; and while he made hideous cries, and nobody would venture to come near to help him, the whole family that were able to stir got out at the windows, one story high, two that were left sick calling out for help. Care was taken to give them nurses to look after them, but the persons fled were never found, till after the plague was abated they returned ; but as nothing could be proved, so nothing could be done to them.

In other cases, some had gardens and walls, or pales[2] between them and their neighbours ; or yards and backhouses ; and these, by friendship and entreaties, would get leave to get over those walls or pales, and so go out at their neighbours' doors ; or, by giving money to their servants, get them to let them through in the night ; so that, in short, the shutting up of houses was in nowise to be depended upon ; neither did it answer the end at all ; serving more to make the people desperate, and drive them to such extremities as that they would break out at all adventures.[3]

And that which was still worse, those that did thus break out spread the infection farther by their wandering about with the distemper upon them, in their desperate circumstances, than they would otherwise have done : for, whoever considers all the particulars in such cases, must acknowledge, and cannot doubt but the severity of those confinements made many people desperate, and made them run out of their houses at all hazards, and with the plague visibly upon them, not knowing either whither to go, or what to do, or, indeed, what they did ; and many that did so were driven to dreadful exigencies and extremities, and perished in the streets or fields for mere want, or dropped down, by[1] the raging violence of the fever upon them. Others wandered into the country, and went forward any way, as their desperation guided them, not knowing whither they went or would go, till, faint and tired, and not getting any relief, the houses and villages on the road refusing to admit them to lodge, whether infected or no, they have perished[2] by the road side, or gotten into barns, and died there, none daring to come to them, or relieve them, though perhaps not infected, for nobody would believe them.

---

[1] Blew.

[2] Stakes.

[3] Costs ; whatever be the fortunes (adventures) they might meet with.

On the other hand, when the plague at first seized a family, that is to say, when any one body of the family had gone out, and unwarily or otherwise catched[3] the distemper and brought it home, it was certainly known by the family before it was known to the officers, who, as you will see by the order, were appointed to examine into the circumstances of all sick persons, when they heard of their being sick.

In this interval, between their being taken sick, and the examiners coming, the master of the house had leisure and liberty to remove himself, or all his family, if he knew whither to go, and many did so. But the great disaster was, that many did thus after they were really infected themselves, and so carried the disease into the houses of those who were so hospitable as to receive them, which, it must be confessed, was very cruel and ungrateful.

I am speaking now of people made desperate by the ap-

[1] From.

[2] More strictly, "till they perished."

[3] Caught.

prehensions of their being shut up, and their breaking out by stratagem or force, either before or after they were shut up, whose misery was not lessened when they were out, but sadly increased. On the other hand, many who thus got away had retreats to go to, and other houses, where they locked themselves up, and kept hid till the plague was over; and many families, foreseeing the approach of the distemper, laid up stores of provisions, sufficient for their whole families, and shut themselves up, and that so entirely that they were neither seen or heard of till the infection was quite ceased, and then came abroad sound and well. I might recollect several such as these, and give you the particulars of their management; for, doubtless, it was the most effectual secure step that could be taken for such whose circumstances would not admit [1] them to remove, or who had not retreats abroad proper for the case; for, in being thus shut up, they were as if they had been a hundred miles off. Nor do I remember that any one of those families miscarried.[2] Among these, several Dutch merchants were particularly remarkable, who kept their houses like little garrisons besieged, suffering none to go in or out, or come near them; particularly one in a court in Throckmorton Street, whose house looked into Drapers' Garden.

But I come back to the case of families infected, and shut up by the magistrates. The misery of those families is not to be expressed; and it was generally in such houses that we heard the most dismal shrieks and outcries of the poor people, terrified, and even frightened to death, by the sight of the condition of their dearest relations, and by the terror of being imprisoned as they were.

I remember, and, while I am writing this story, I think I hear the very sound of it: a certain lady had an only daughter, a young maiden about nineteen years old, and who was possessed of a very considerable fortune; they were only lodgers in the house where they were. The

[1] Permit

[2] Their plans did not miscarry.

young woman, her mother, and the maid had been abroad on some occasion, I do not remember what, for the house was not shut up; but, about two hours after they came home, the young lady complained she was not well, in a quarter of an hour more she vomited, and had a violent pain in her head. "Pray God," says her mother, in a terrible fright, "my child has not the distemper!" The pain in her head increasing, her mother ordered the bed to be warmed, and resolved to put her to bed; and prepared to give her things to sweat, which was the ordinary remedy to be taken, when the first apprehensions of the distemper began.

While the bed was airing, the mother undressed the young woman, and just as she was laid down in the bed, she, looking upon her body with a candle, immediately discovered the fatal tokens on the inside of her thighs. Her mother, not being able to contain herself, threw down her candle, and screeched out in such a frightful manner that it was enough to place horror upon the stoutest heart in the world; nor was it one scream, or one cry, but the fright having seized her spirits, she fainted first, then recovered, then ran all over the house, up the stairs and down the stairs, like one distracted, and, indeed, really was distracted, and continued screeching and crying out for several hours, void of all sense, or, at least, government of her senses, and, as I was told, never came thoroughly to herself again. As to the young maiden, she was a dead corpse from that moment; for the gangrene, which occasions the spots, had spread over her whole body, and she died in less than two hours. But still the mother continued crying out, not knowing any thing more of her child, several hours after she was dead. It is so long ago that I am not certain, but I think the mother never recovered, but died in two or three weeks after.

I have by me a story of two brothers and their kinsman, who, being[1] single men, but that[2] had stayed in the city

[1] Although. [2] Yet.

too long to get away, and, indeed, not knowing where to go to have any retreat, nor having wherewith to travel far, took a course for their own preservation, which, though in itself at first desperate, yet was so natural, that it may be wondered that no more did so at that time. They were but of mean condition, and yet not so very poor as that they could not furnish themselves with some little conveniences, such as might serve to keep life and soul together; and, finding the distemper increasing in a terrible manner, they resolved to shift as well as they could, and to be gone.

One of them had been a soldier in the late wars, and before that in the Low Countries;[1] and, having been bred to no particular employment but his arms, and, besides, being wounded, and not able to work very hard, had for some time been employed at a baker's of sea-biscuit, in Wapping.

The brother of this man was a seaman, too, but, somehow or other, had been hurt of one leg, that[2] he could not go to sea, but had worked for his living at a sailmaker's in Wapping, or thereabouts; and being a good husband,[3] had laid up some money, and was the richest of the three.

The third man was a joiner or carpenter by trade, a handy fellow; and he had no wealth but his box, or basket of tools, with the help of which he could at any time get his living, such a time as this excepted, wherever he went, and he lived near Shadwell.

They all lived in Stepney parish, which, as I have said, being the last that was infected, or at least violently, they stayed there till they evidently saw the plague was abating at the west part of the town, and coming towards the east, where they lived.

The story of those three men, if the reader will be content to have me give it in their own persons, without taking upon me to either vouch the particulars, or answer for any mistakes, I shall give as distinctly as I can; believing the history will be a very good pattern for any poor man to follow, in case the like public desolation should happen here; and if there may be no such occasion, which God of his infinite mercy grant us, still the story may have its uses so many ways, as that it will, I hope, never be said that the relating has been unprofitable.

---

[1] The Netherlands.

[2] So that.

[3] Thrifty.

I say all this previous to the history, having yet, for the present, much more to say before I quit my own part.[1]

I went all the first part of the time freely about the streets, though not so freely as to run myself into apparent danger, except when they dug the great pit in the churchyard of our parish of Aldgate. A terrible pit it was, and I could not resist my curiosity to go and see it; as near as I may judge, it was about forty feet in length, and about fifteen or sixteen feet broad; and, at the time I first looked at it, about nine feet deep; but, it was said, they dug it near twenty feet deep afterwards, in one part of it, till they could go no deeper for the water; for they had, it seems, dug several large pits before this; for, though the plague was long a coming[2] to our parish, yet, when it did come, there was no parish in or about London where it raged with such violence as in the two parishes of Aldgate and Whitechapel.

I say they had dug several pits in another ground when the distemper began to spread in our parish, and especially when the dead-carts began to go about, which was not in our parish till the beginning of August. Into these pits they had put perhaps fifty or sixty bodies each; then they made larger holes, wherein they buried all that the cart brought in a week, which, by the middle to the end of August, came to from two hundred to four hundred a week; and they could not well dig them larger, because of the order of the magistrate, confining them to leave no bodies within six feet of the surface; and the water coming on[1] at about seventeen or eighteen feet, they could not well, I say, put more in one pit; but now, at the beginning of September, the plague raging in a dreadful manner, and the number of burials in our parish increasing to more than was ever buried in any parish about London, of no larger extent, they ordered this dreadful gulf to be dug, for such it was rather than a pit.

---

[1] Of the story.

[2] A good colloquial idiom. "A" is a reduced form of the preposition "on."

They had supposed this pit would have supplied them for a month or more, when they dug it, and some blamed the churchwardens for suffering such a frightful thing, telling them they were making preparations to bury the whole parish, and the like; but time made it appear the churchwardens knew the condition of the parish better than they did; for, the pit being finished the 4th of September, I think they began to bury in it the 6th, and by the 20th, which was just two weeks, they had thrown into it 1114 bodies, when they were obliged to fill it up, the bodies being then come to lie within six feet of the surface. I doubt not but there may be some ancient persons alive in the parish, who can justify the fact of this, and are able to show even in what place of the churchyard the pit lay better than I can; the mark of it also was many years to be seen in the churchyard on the surface, lying, in length, parallel with the passage which goes by the west wall of the churchyard, out of Houndsditch, and turns east again, into Whitechapel, coming out near the Three Nuns Inn.

It was about the 10th of September that my curiosity led, or rather drove, me to go and see this pit again, when there had been near four hundred people buried in it; and I was not content to see it in the day time, as I had done before, for then there would have been nothing to have been seen but the loose earth; for all the bodies that were thrown in were immediately covered with earth, by those they called the buriers, which at other times were called bearers; but I resolved to go in the night, and see some of them thrown in.

---

[1] In ?

There was a strict order to prevent people coming to those pits, and that was only to prevent infection; but, after some time, that order was more necessary, for people that were infected, and near their end, and delirious also, would run to those pits wrapt in blankets, or rugs, and throw themselves in, and, as they said, bury themselves. I cannot say that the officers suffered any willingly to lie there; but I have heard that in a great pit in Finsbury, in the parish of Cripplegate, it lying open then to the fields, for it was not then walled about, many came and threw themselves in, and expired there, before they threw any earth upon them; and that when they came to bury others, and found them there, they were quite dead, though not cold.

This may serve a little to describe the dreadful condition of that day, though it is impossible to say anything that is able to give a true idea of it to those who did not see it, other than this, that it was indeed, very, very, very dreadful, and such as no tongue can express.

I got admittance into the churchyard by being acquainted with the sexton who attended, who, though he did not refuse me at all, yet earnestly persuaded me not to go: telling me very seriously, for he was a good, religious, and sensible man, that it was, indeed, their business and duty to venture, and to run all hazards, and that in it they might hope to be preserved; but that I had no apparent call to it but my own curiosity, which, he said, he believed I would not pretend was sufficient to justify my running that hazard. I told him I had been pressed in my mind to go, and that, perhaps, it might be an instructing sight, that might not be without its uses. "Nay," says the good man, "if you will venture upon that score, 'Name[1] of God, go in; for, depend upon it, it will be a sermon to you, it may be, the best that ever you heard in

[1] In the Name.

your life. It is a speaking sight," says he, "and has a voice with it, and a loud one, to call us all to repentance;" and with that he opened the door, and said, "Go, if you will."

His discourse had shocked my resolution a little, and I stood wavering for a good while, but, just at that interval, I saw two links[1] come over from the end of the Minories, and heard the bellman, and then appeared a dead-cart, as they called it, coming over the streets; so I could no longer resist my desire of seeing it, and went in. There was nobody as[2] I could perceive at first, in the churchyard, or going into it, but the buriers, and the fellow that drove the cart, or rather led the horse and cart, but when they came up to the pit, they saw a man go to and again,[3] muffled up in a brown cloak, and making motions with his hands, under his cloak, as if he was in great agony; and the buriers immediately gathered about him, supposing he was one of those poor delirious, or desperate creatures, that used to pretend, as I have said, to bury themselves; he said nothing as he walked about, but two or three times groaned very deeply, and loud, and sighed as[4] he would break his heart.

When the buriers came up to him, they soon found he was neither a person infected and desperate, as I have observed above, or a person distempered in mind, but one oppressed with a dreadful weight of grief indeed, having his wife and several of his children, all in the cart that was just come in with him, and he followed in an agony and excess of sorrow. He mourned heartily, as it was easy to see, but with a kind of masculine grief, that could not give itself vent by tears; and, calmly desiring the buriers to let him alone, said he would only see the bodies thrown in, and go away, so they left importuning him; but no sooner was the cart turned round, and the bodies shot into the pit, promiscuously, which was a surprise to him, for he at least expected they would have been decently laid in, though indeed, he was afterwards convinced that was impracticable ; I say, no sooner did he see the sight, but he cried out aloud, unable to contain himself. I could not hear what he said, but he went backward two or three steps, and fell down in a swoon ; the buriers ran to him and took him up, and in a little while he came to himself, and they led him away to the Pye Tavern, over-against the end of Houndsditch, where, it seems, the man was known, and where they took care of him. He looked into the pit again, as he went away, but the buriers had covered the bodies so immediately with throwing in earth, that, though there was light enough, for there were lanthorns and candles in them, placed all night round the sides of the pit, upon the heaps of earth, seven or eight, or perhaps more, yet nothing could be seen.

---

[1] Torches. [2] That. [3] To and fro. [4] As if.

This was a mournful scene indeed, and affected me almost as much as the rest; but the other[1] was awful, and full of terror ; the cart had in it sixteen or seventeen bodies ; some were wrapt up in linen sheets, some in rugs, some little other than naked, or so loose,[2] that what covering they had fell from them, in the shooting out of the cart, and they fell quite naked among the rest ; but the matter was not much to them, or the indecency much to anyone else, seeing they were all dead, and were to be huddled together into the common grave of mankind, as we may call it, for here was no difference made, but poor and rich went together ; there was no other way of burials, neither was it possible there should,[3] for coffins were not to be had for the prodigious numbers that fell in such a calamity as this.

It was reported, by way of scandal upon the buriers, that if any corpse was delivered to them, decently wound up, as we called it then, in a winding sheet tied over the head and feet, which some did, and which[4] was generally of good linen ; I say, it was reported, that the buriers were so wicked as to strip them in the cart, and carry them quite naked to the ground: but, as I cannot credit anything so vile among Christians, and at a time so filled with terrors as that was, I can only relate it, and leave it undetermined.

---

[1] What he now goes on to relate.

[2] So loosely wrapped.

[3] Should be.

[4] The sheet.

Innumerable stories also went about of the cruel behaviour and practice of nurses who attended the sick, and of their hastening on the fate of those they attended in their sickness. But I shall say more of this in its place.

I was, indeed, shocked with this sight; it almost overwhelmed me; and I went away with my heart most afflicted, and full of afflicting thoughts, such as I cannot describe; just at my going out of the church, and turning up the street towards my own house, I saw another cart, with links[1] and a bellman going before, coming out of Harrow Alley, in the Butcher Row, on the other side of the way, and being, as I perceived, very full of dead bodies, it went directly over the street also towards the church. I stood awhile, but I had no stomach to go back again to see the same dismal scene over again; so I went directly home, where I could not but consider with thankfulness, the risk I had run, believing I had gotten no injury; as, indeed, I had not.

Here the poor unhappy gentleman's grief came into my head again, and, indeed, I could not but shed tears in the reflection upon it, perhaps more than he did himself; but his case lay so heavy upon my mind that I could not prevail with myself but that I must go out again into the street, and go to the Pye Tavern, resolving to inquire what became of him.

It was by this time one o'clock in the morning, and yet the poor gentleman was there; the truth was, the people of the house, knowing him, had entertained him,[2] and kept him there all the night, notwithstanding the danger of being infected by him, though it appeared the man was perfectly sound himself.

It is with regret that I take notice of this tavern. The people were civil, mannerly, and an obliging sort of folks enough, and had till this time kept their house open, and their trade going on, though not so very publicly as formerly; but there was a dreadful set of fellows that used their house, and who, in the middle of all this horror, met there every night, behaving with all the revelling and roaring extravagances as is usual for such people to do at other times, and, indeed, to such an offensive degree, that the very master and mistress of the house grew first ashamed, and then terrified, at them.

---

[1] Torches.

[2] Received him as a guest.

They sat generally in a room next the street; and, as they always kept late hours, so when the dead-cart came across the street end to go into Houndsditch, which was in view of the tavern windows, they would frequently open the windows, as soon as they heard the bell, and look out at them; and, as they might often hear sad lamentations of people in the streets, or at their windows, as the carts went along, they would make their impudent mocks and jeers at them, especially if they heard the poor people call upon God to have mercy upon them, as many would do at those times, in their ordinary passing along the streets.

These gentlemen, being something disturbed with the clutter[1] of bringing the poor gentleman into the house, as above, were first angry and very high with the master of the house, for suffering such a fellow, as they called him, to be brought out of the grave into their house; but, being answered, that the man was a neighbour, and that he was sound, but overwhelmed with the calamity of his family, and the like, they turned their anger into ridiculing the man and his sorrow for his wife and children; taunting him with want of courage to leap into the great pit, and go to heaven, as they jeeringly expressed it, along with them; adding some very profane, and even blasphemous expressions.

They were at this vile work when I came back to the house, and, as far as I could see, though the man sat still, mute, and disconsolate, and their affronts could not divert his sorrow, yet he was both grieved and offended at their discourse. Upon this, I gently reproved them, being well enough acquainted with their characters, and not unknown in person to two of them.

---

[1] Confusion.

They immediately fell upon me with ill language and oaths; asked me what I did out of my grave at such a time, when so many honester men were carried into the church-yard; and why I was not at home saying my prayers, against[1] the dead-cart came for me; and the like.

I was, indeed, astonished at the impudence of the men, though not at all discomposed at their treatment of me; however, I kept my temper. I told them, that, though I defied them, or any man in the world, to tax me with any dishonesty, yet I acknowledged, that, in this terrible judgment of God, many better than I were swept away, and carried to their grave; but, to answer their question directly, the case was, that I was mercifully preserved by that great God whose name they had blasphemed and taken in vain, by cursing and swearing in a dreadful manner; and that I believed I was preserved in particular, among other ends of his goodness, that I might reprove them for their audacious boldness, in behaving in such a manner, and in such an awful time as this was, especially for their jeering and mocking at an honest gentleman, and a neighbour, for some of them knew him, who they saw was overwhelmed with sorrow, for the breaches which it had pleased God to make upon his family.

I cannot call exactly to mind the hellish, abominable raillery, which was the return they made to that talk of mine, being provoked, it seems, that I was not at all afraid to be free with them; nor, if I could remember, would I fill my account with any of the words, the horrid oaths, curses, and vile expressions, such as, at that time of the day, even the worst and ordinariest people in the street would not use; for, except such hardened creatures as these, the most wicked wretches that could be found, had at that time some terror upon their mind, of the hand of that Power which could thus in a moment destroy them.

---

[1] In readiness for the coming of the dead cart.

But that which was the worst in all their devilish language was that they were not afraid to blaspheme God, and talk atheistically ; making a jest at my calling the plague the hand of God, mocking, and even laughing at the word judgment, as if the providence of God had no concern in the inflicting such a desolating stroke ; and that the people calling upon God, as they saw the carts carrying away the dead bodies, was all enthusiastic,[1] absurd, and impertinent.

I made them some reply, such as I thought proper, but which I found was so far from putting a check to their horrid way of speaking, that it made them rail the more ; so that I confess it filled me with horror and a kind of rage, and I came away, as I told them, lest the hand of that judgment which had visited the whole city should glorify his vengeance upon them,[2] and all that were near them.

They received all reproof with the utmost contempt, and made the greatest mockery that was possible for them to do at me, giving me all the opprobrious, insolent scoffs that they could think of for preaching to them, as they called it, which, indeed, grieved me, rather than angered me ; and I went away blessing God, however, in my mind, that I had not spared them, though they had insulted me so much.

They continued this wretched course three or four days after this, continually mocking and jeering at all that showed themselves religious, or serious, or that were any way touched with the sense of the terrible judgment of God upon us, and I was informed they flouted in the same manner at the good people, who, notwithstanding the contagion, met at the church, fasted, and prayed to God to remove his hand from them.

I say, they continued this dreadful course three or four days, I think it was no more, when one of them, particularly he who asked the poor gentleman what he did out of his grave, was struck from heaven with the plague, and died in a most deplorable manner ; and, in a word, they were every one of them carried into the great pit, which I have mentioned above, before it was quite filled up, which was not above a fortnight, or thereabout.

---

[1] Extravagant.

[2] Should take a glorious vengeance on them.

These men were guilty of many extravagances, such as one would think human nature should have trembled at the thoughts of, at such a time of general terror as was then upon us ; and, particularly, scoffing and mocking at everything which they happened to see that was religious among the people, especially at their thronging zealously to the place of public worship, to implore mercy from heaven in such a time of distress ; and this tavern where they held their club being within view of the church door, they had the more particular occasion for their atheistical, profane mirth.

But this began to abate a little with them before the accident, which I have related, happened ; for the infection increased so violently at this part of the town now, that people began to be afraid to come to the church ; at least such numbers did not resort thither as was usual ; many of the clergymen likewise were dead, and others gone into the country ; for it really required a steady courage and a strong faith for a man not only to venture being in town at such a time as this, but likewise to venture to come to church and perform the office of a minister to a congregation, of whom he had reason to believe many of them were actually infected with the plague, and to do this every day, or twice a day, as in some places was done.

It seems they had been checked for their open insulting[1] religion in this manner, by several good people of every persuasion, and that[2] and the violent raging of the infection, I suppose, was the occasion that they had abated much of their rudeness for some time before, and were

[1] Insulting of.

[2] The fact that they had been checked.

only roused by the spirit of ribaldry and atheism at the clamour which was made, when the gentleman was first brought in there, and, perhaps, were agitated by the same devil,[1] when I took upon me to reprove them; though I did it at first with all the calmness, temper, and good manners that I could, which, for awhile, they insulted me the more for, thinking it had been in fear of their resentment, though afterwards they found the contrary.

These things lay upon my mind; and I went home very much grieved and oppressed with the horror of these men's wickedness, and to think that anything could be so vile, so hardened, and so notoriously wicked, as to insult God and his servants, and his worship, in such a manner, and at such a time as this was; when he had, as it were, his sword drawn in his hand, on purpose to take vengeance, not on them only, but on the whole nation.

I had, indeed, been in some passion, at first, with them, though it was really raised, not by any affront they had offered me personally, but by the horror their blaspheming tongues filled me with; however, I was doubtful in my thoughts whether the resentment I retained was not all upon my own private account, for they had given me a great deal of ill language, too, I mean personally; but after some pause, and having a weight of grief upon my mind, I retired myself,[2] as soon as I came home, for I slept not that night, and giving God most humble thanks for my preservation in the imminent danger I had been in, I set my mind seriously, and with the utmost earnestness, to pray for those desperate wretches, that God would pardon them, open their eyes, and effectually humble them.

By this I not only did my duty, namely to pray for those who despitefully used me,[3] but I fully tried[4] my own heart, to my full satisfaction, that[5] it was not filled with any spirit of resentment as[6] they had offended me in par-

[1] The spirit of ribaldry and atheism, referred to above.

[2] The idiom of to-day omits "myself."

[3] *St. Matthew* v. 44.

[4] Examined.

[5] To convince myself that.

[6] Inasmuch as.

ticular; and I humbly recommend the method to all those that would know or be certain, how to distinguish between their zeal for the honour of God, and the effects of their private passions and resentment.

I remember a citizen, who, having broken out of his house in Aldersgate Street, or thereabout, went along the road to Islington; he attempted to have gone[1] in at the Angel Inn, and after that at the White Horse, two inns, known still by the same signs,[2] but was refused; after which he came to the Pyed Bull,[3] an inn also still continuing the same sign; he asked them for lodging for one night only, pretending to be going into Lincolnshire, and assuring them of his being very sound, and free from the infection, which also, at that time, had not reached much that way.

They told him they had no lodging that they could spare, but one bed up in the garret, and that they could spare that bed but for one night, some drovers being expected the next day with cattle; so, if he would accept of that lodging, he might have it, which he did; so a servant was sent up with a candle with him, to show him the room. He was very well dressed, and looked like a person not used to lie in a garret, and when he came to the room he fetched a deep sigh, and said to the servant, "I have seldom lain in such a lodging as this;" however, the servant assured him again that they had no better: "Well," says he, "I must make shift; this is a dreadful time; but it is but for one night;" so he sat down upon the bed-side, and bade the maid, I think it was, fetch him a pint of warm ale; accordingly the servant went for the ale, but some hurry in the house, which, perhaps, employed her otherways, put it out of her head, and she went up no more to him.

---

[1] To go.

[2] Signs bearing representations of an angel and a white horse, of course, and not merely printed words, which the ignorant could not read.

[3] The Spotted Bull.

The next morning, seeing no appearance of the gentleman, somebody in the house asked the servant that had showed him up stairs, what was become of him. She started; "Alas," says she, "I never thought more of him: he bade me carry him some warm ale, but I forgot;" upon which, not the maid, but some other person was sent up to see after him, who, coming into the room, found him stark dead, and almost cold, stretched out across the bed; his clothes were pulled off, his jaw fallen, his eyes open in a most frightful posture, the rug of the bed being grasped hard in one of his hands, so that it was plain he died soon after the maid left him, and it is probable, had she gone up with the ale, she had found him dead in a few minutes after he had sat down upon the bed. The alarm was great in the house, as any one may suppose, they having been free from the distemper till that disaster, which, bringing the infection to the house, spread it immediately to other houses round about it. I do not remember how many died in the house itself, but I think the maid-servant, who went up first with him, fell presently ill by the fright, and several others; for, whereas, there died but two in Islington of the plague, the week before, there died nineteen the week after, whereof fourteen were of the plague; this was in the week from the 11th of July to the 18th.

There was one shift[1] that some families had, and that not a few, when their houses happened to be infected, and that was this; the families, who, in the first breaking out of the distemper, fled away into the country and had retreats among their friends, generally found some or other of their neighbours or relations to commit the charge of those houses to, for the safety of the goods, and the like. Some houses were, indeed, entirely locked up, the doors padlocked, the windows and doors having deal boards nailed over them, and only[2] the inspection of them committed

[1] Device.

[2] The inspection of them committed only to the ordinary watchmen, etc.

to the ordinary watchmen and parish officers, but these[1] were but few.

It was thought, that there were not less than a thousand houses forsaken of the inhabitants, in the city and suburbs, including what was in the out-parishes, and in Surrey, or the side of the water they called Southwark. This was besides the numbers of lodgers and of particular persons[2] who were fled out of other families, so that in all it was computed that about two hundred thousand people were fled and gone in all.[3] But of this I shall speak again; but[4] I mention it here on this account, namely, that it was a rule with those, who had thus two houses in their keeping or care, that if anybody was taken sick in the family, before the master of the family let the examiners or any other officer know of it, he immediately would send all the rest of his family, whether children or servants, as it fell out to be, to such other house which[5] he had not[6] in charge, and then giving notice of the sick person to the examiner, have a nurse or nurses appointed, and, having another person to be shut up in the house with them (which many for money would do), so to take charge of the house, in case the person should die.

This was in many cases the saving[7] a whole family, who, if they had been shut up with the sick person, would inevitably have perished; but, on the other hand, this was another of the inconveniences of shutting up houses; for the apprehensions and terror of being shut up made many run away with the rest of the family, who,[8] though it was not publicly known, and they were not quite sick, had yet the distemper upon them ; and who, by having an uninterrupted liberty to go about, but being obliged still to conceal their circumstances, or, perhaps, not knowing it themselves, gave the distemper to others, and spread the infection in a dreadful manner, as I shall explain farther hereafter.

---

[1] These houses.

[2] "Particular persons," individuals.

[3] "In all," an unnecessary addition.

[4] Here the author changes abruptly his line of thought, and goes back to the subject introduced by the first sentence in the preceding paragraph, that of houses deserted by their owners and left in charge of other persons.

[5] To such other house as.

[6] The sense seems to require that "not" should be omitted.

[7] The saving of.

[8] Made many run away, who.

I had in my family only an ancient woman, that managed the house, a maid-servant, two apprentices, and myself, and the plague beginning to increase about us, I had many sad thoughts about what course I should take, and how I should act ; the many dismal objects[1] which happened everywhere, as I went about the streets, had filled my mind with a great deal of horror, for fear of the distemper itself, which was, indeed, very horrible in itself, and in some more than others ; the swellings, which were generally in the neck or groin, when they grew hard, and would not break, grew so painful that it was equal to the most exquisite torture ; and some, not able to bear the torment, threw themselves out at windows, or shot themselves, or otherwise made themselves away,[2] and I saw several dismal objects of that kind : others, unable to contain themselves, vented their pain by incessant roarings, and such loud and lamentable cries were to be heard, as we walked along the streets, that[3] would pierce the very heart to think of, especially when it was to be considered that the same dreadful scourge might be expected every moment to seize upon ourselves.

I cannot say but that now I began to faint in my resolutions ; my heart failed me very much, and sorely I repented of my rashness, when I had been out, and met with such terrible things as these I have talked of ; I say, I repented my rashness in venturing to abide in town, and I wished, often, that I had not taken upon me to stay, but had gone away with my brother and his family.

---

[1] "Events or circumstances, which happened everywhere," or else, "objects which I saw everywhere," would make better sense.

[2] Made away with themselves.

[3] As.

Terrified by those frightful objects, I would retire home sometimes, and resolve to go out no more, and perhaps I would keep those resolutions for three or four days, which time I spent in the most serious thankfulness for my preservation, and the preservation of my family, and the constant confession of my sins, giving myself up to God every day, and applying to him with fasting and humiliation and meditation. Such intervals as I had, I employed in reading books, and in writing down my memorandums of what occurred to me every day, and out of which, afterwards, I took most of this work, as it relates to my observations without doors; what I wrote of my private meditations I reserve for private use, and desire it may not be made public on any account whatever.

I also wrote other meditations upon divine[1] subjects, such as occurred to me at that time, and were profitable to myself, but not fit for any other view, and therefore I say no more of that.

I had a very good friend, a physician, whose name was Heath, whom I frequently visited during this dismal time, and to whose advice I was very much obliged for many things which he directed me to take by way of preventing the infection when I went out, as he found I frequently did, and to hold in my mouth, when I was in the streets; he also came very often to see me, and as he was a good Christian, as well as a good physician, his agreeable conversation was a very great support to me, in the worst of this terrible time.

It was now the beginning of August, and the plague grew very violent and terrible in the place where I lived, and Dr. Heath, coming to visit me and finding that I ventured so often out in the streets, earnestly persuaded me to lock myself up, and my family, and not to suffer any of us to go out of doors; to keep all our windows fast, shutters and curtains close, and never to open them, but first to make[2] a very strong smoke in the room, where the window or door was to be opened, with rosin and pitch, brimstone and gunpowder, and the like, and we did this for some time, but as I had not laid in a store of provision for such a retreat, it was impossible that we could keep within doors entirely ; however, I attempted, though it was so very late, to do something towards it ; and first, as I had convenience both for brewing and baking, I went and bought two sacks of meal, and for several weeks, having an oven, we baked all our own bread ; also I bought malt, and brewed as much beer as all the casks I had would hold, and which seemed enough to serve my house for five or six weeks ; also, I laid in a quantity of salt butter and Cheshire cheese ; but I had no flesh[1] meat, and the plague raged so violently among the butchers and slaughter-houses, on the other side of our street, where they are known to dwell in great numbers, that it was not advisable so much as to go over the street among them.

---

[1] Sacred.

[2] Never to open them without first making, etc.

And here I must observe again that this necessity of going out of our houses to buy provisions, was in a great measure the ruin of the whole city, for the people catched the distemper, on these occasions, one of another, and even the provisions themselves were often tainted, at least I have great reason to believe so ; and, therefore, I cannot say with satisfaction, what I know is repeated with great assurance, that the market people, and such as brought provisions to town, were never infected. I am certain the butchers of Whitechapel, where the greatest part of the flesh meat was killed, were dreadfully visited, and that at last to such a degree that few of their shops were kept open, and those that remained of them killed their meat at Mile End, and that way,[2] and brought it to market upon horses.

However, the poor people could not lay up provisions, and there was a necessity that they must go to market to buy, and others to send servants, or their children ; and, as this was a necessity which renewed itself daily, it brought abundance of unsound people to the markets, and a great many that went thither sound, brought death home with them.

---

[1] Flesh meat is the flesh of beasts, as distinguished from that of fish.

[2] In that vicinity.

It is true, people used all possible precaution; when any one bought a joint of meat in the market, they [1] would not take it out of the butcher's hand, but took it off the hooks themselves. On the other hand, the butcher would not touch the money, but have it put into a pot full of vinegar, which he kept for that purpose. The buyer carried always small money to make up any odd sum, that they might take no change. They carried bottles for scents and perfumes in their hands, and all the means that could be used were employed; but then the poor could not do even these things, and they went at all hazards.[2]

Innumerable dismal stories we heard every day on this very account. Sometimes a man or woman dropt down dead in the very markets; for many people that had the plague upon them knew nothing of it till the inward gangrene had affected their vitals, and they died in a few moments; this caused [3] that many died frequently in that manner in the street suddenly, without any warning; others, perhaps, had time to go to the next bulk or stall,[4] or to any door or porch, and just sit down and die, as I have said before.

These objects were so frequent in the streets, that, when the plague came to be very raging on one side,[5] there was scarce any passing by the streets, but that [6] several dead bodies would be lying here and there upon the ground; on the other hand, it is observable, that though, at first, the people would stop as they went along, and call to the neighbours to come out on such an occasion, yet, afterward, no notice was taken of them; but that,[1] if at any time we found a corpse lying, go [2] across the way and not come near it; or if in a narrow lane or passage, go back again, and seek some other way to go on the business we were upon; and, in those cases, the corpse was always left till the officers had notice to come and take them [3] away; or till night, when the bearers attending the dead-cart would take them up and carry them away. Nor did those undaunted creatures who performed these offices fail to search their pockets, and sometimes strip off their clothes if they were well dressed, as sometimes they were, and carry off what they could get.

---

[1] He. The syntax of the sentence is confused.

[2] Either, "went (*i.e.*, to market) at all hazards," or, "went at (*i.e.*, ran) all hazards (risks)."

[3] Frequently caused the death of many.

[4] Open booth, in front of a shop. "Bulk" scarcely differed in meaning from "stall."

[5] Of the city.

[6] "But that" is here equivalent to "without."

But, to return to the markets; the butchers took that care, that, if any person died in the market, they had the officers always at hand, to take them up upon hand-barrows, and carry them to the next [4] churchyard; and this was so frequent, that such were not entered in the weekly bill, found [5] dead in the streets or fields, as is the case now, but they went into the general articles [6] of the great distemper.

But now the fury of the distemper increased to such a degree, that even the markets were but very thinly furnished with provisions, or frequented with buyers, compared to what they were before; and the lord mayor caused the country people who brought provisions, to be stopped in the streets leading into the town, and to sit down there with their goods, where they sold what they brought, and went immediately away; and this encouraged the country people greatly to do so, for they sold their provisions at the very entrances into the town, and even in the fields; as, particularly, in the fields beyond Whitechapel, in Spitalfields. Note,[7] those streets, now called Spitalfields, were then, indeed, open fields: also, in St. George's Fields, in Southwark; in Bunhill Fields, and in a great field, called Wood's Close, near Islington; thither the lord mayor, aldermen, and magistrates, sent their officers and servants to buy for their families, themselves keeping within doors as much as possible, and the like did many other people; and after this method was taken, the country people came with great cheerfulness, and brought provisions of all sorts, and very seldom got any harm; which I suppose added also to that report of their being miraculously preserved.

---

[1] But (it is observable) that. [2] We would go. [3] It. [4] Nearest.

[5] "Entered in the weekly bill as found, etc.," or, "entered in the weekly bill, 'Found dead, etc.'"

[6] Under the general headings or divisions of the bill.

[7] Note that.

As for my little family, having thus, as I have said, laid in a store of bread, butter, cheese, and beer, I took my friend and physician's advice,[1] and locked myself up, and my family, and resolved to suffer the hardship of living a few months without flesh meat, rather than to purchase it at the hazard of our lives.

But, though I confined my family, I could not prevail upon my unsatisfied curiosity to stay within entirely myself; and, though I generally came frighted and terrified home, yet I could not restrain; only,[2] that indeed I did not do it so frequently as at first.

I had some little obligations indeed upon me, to go to my brother's house, which was in Coleman Street parish, and which he had left to my care; and I went at first every day, but afterwards only once or twice a week.

In these walks I had many dismal scenes before my eyes; as, particularly, of persons falling dead in the streets, terrible shrieks and screechings of women, who, in their agonies, would throw open their chamber windows, and cry out in a dismal surprising manner. It is impossible to describe the variety of postures in which the passions of the poor people would express themselves.

Passing through Token House Yard, in Lothbury, of a sudden a casement violently opened just over my head, and a woman gave three frightful screeches, and then cried, "Oh! death, death, death!" in a most inimitable tone, and which[1] struck me with horror, and a chilness in my very blood. There was nobody to be seen in the whole street, neither did any other window open, for people had no curiosity now in any case, nor could anybody help one another; so I went on to pass into Bell Alley.

---

[1] The advice of my friend and physician.

[2] Except.

Just in Bell Alley, on the right hand of the passage, there was a more terrible cry than that, though it was not so directed out at the window, but the whole family was in a terrible fright, and I could hear women and children run screaming about the rooms like distracted, when a garret window opened, and somebody from a window on the other side the alley called and asked, "What is the matter?" Upon which, from the first window, it was answered, "O Lord, my old master has hanged himself!" The other asked again, "Is he quite dead?" and the first answered, "Ay, ay, quite dead: quite dead and cold!" This person was a merchant, and a deputy alderman, and very rich. I care not to mention his name, though I knew his name, too; but that would be a hardship to the family, which is now flourishing again.

But this is but one. It is scarce credible what dreadful cases happened in particular[2] families every day; people, in the rage of the distemper, or in the torment of their swellings, which was indeed intolerable, running out of their own government,[3] raving and distracted, and oftentimes laying violent hands upon themselves, throwing themselves out at[4] their windows, shooting themselves, etc. Mothers murdering their own children, in their lunacy; some dying of mere grief, as a passion;[5] some of mere fright and surprise, without any infection at all; others frighted[6] into idiotism[7] and foolish distractions;[8] some into despair and lunacy; others into melancholy[9] madness.[10]

---

[1] In a tone which was most inimitable, and which, etc.

[2] Individual.

[3] Losing control of themselves.

[4] Of.

[5] As, for instance, of a passion.

[6] Frightened.

[7] Idiocy.

[8] Affections of the mind.

[9] The madness of melancholia.

[10] This sentence has no finite verb in it, and should strictly be regarded as a series of clauses forming a part of the preceding sentence.

The pain of the swelling was in particular very violent, and to some intolerable; the physicians and surgeons may be said to have tortured many poor creatures even to death. The swellings in some grew hard, and they applied violent drawing plasters, or poultices, to break them; and if these did not do, they cut and scarified them[1] in a terrible manner. In some, those swellings were made hard, partly by the force of the distemper, and partly by their being too violently drawn, and were so hard, that no instrument could cut them, and then they burnt them with caustics, so that many died raving mad with the torment, and some in the very operation. In these distresses, some, for want of help to hold them down in their beds, or to look to them, laid hands upon themselves, as above; some broke out into the streets, perhaps naked, and would run directly down to the river, if they were not stopped by the watchmen, or other officers, and plunge themselves into the water, wherever they found it.

It often pierced my very soul to hear the groans and cries of those who were thus tormented: but of the two this[2] was counted the most promising particular in the whole infection; for, if these swellings could be brought to a head, and to break and run, or, as the surgeons call it, to digest, the patient generally recovered; whereas, those who, like the gentlewoman's daughter,[3] were struck with death at the beginning, and had the tokens come out upon them, often went about indifferently easy, till a little before they died, and some till the moment they dropt down, as in apoplexies and epilepsies is often the case. Such would be taken suddenly very sick, and would run to a bench or bulk, or any convenient place that offered itself, or to their own houses, if possible, as I mentioned before, and there sit down, grow faint, and die. This kind of dying was much the same as it was with those who die of common mortifications,[4] who die swooning, and, as it were,

[1] The swellings.

[2] The swellings.

[3] See page 55.

[4] Cases in which the flesh mortifies.

go away in a dream; such as died thus had very little notice of their being infected at all, till the gangrene was spread through their whole body; nor could physicians themselves know certainly how it was with them, till they opened[1] their breasts, or other parts of their body, and saw the tokens.

We had at this time a great many frightful stories told us of nurses and watchmen, who looked after the dying people, that is to say, hired nurses, who attended infected people, using them barbarously, starving them, smothering them, or, by other wicked means, hastening their end; that is to say, murdering of them. And watchmen[2] being set to guard houses that were shut up, when there has been but one person left, and perhaps that one lying sick, that they have broke in and murdered that body, and immediately thrown them[3] out into the dead-cart; and so they have gone scarce cold to the grave.

I cannot say but that some such murders were committed, and I think two were sent to prison for it, but died before they could be tried; and I have heard that three others, at several times, were executed for murders of that kind. But, I must say, I believe nothing of its being so common a crime as some have since been pleased to say; nor did it seem to be so rational, where the people were brought so low as not to be able to help themselves, for such seldom recovered, and there was no temptation to commit a murder; at least, not equal to the fact,[4] where they were sure persons would die in so short a time, and could not live.

That there were a great many robberies and wicked practices committed even in this dreadful time, I do not deny; the power of avarice was so strong in some, that they would run any hazard to steal and to plunder; and, particularly, in houses where all the families or inhabitants have been dead and carried out, they would break in at all hazards, and, without regard to the danger of infection, take even the clothes off the dead bodies, and the bed clothes from others, where they lay dead.

---

[1] Examined. [2] And we have heard stories of watchmen. [3] It.

[4] The temptation was not so strong as to blind the would-be murderers to the plain fact now mentioned.

This, I suppose, must be the case of a family in Houndsditch, where a man and his daughter, the rest of the family being, as I suppose, carried away before by the dead-cart, were found stark naked, one in one chamber, and one in another, lying dead on the floor, and the clothes of the beds, from whence it is supposed they were rolled off, by thieves, stolen, and carried quite away.

It is, indeed, to be observed, that the women were, in all this calamity, the most rash, fearless, and desperate creatures; and, as there were vast numbers that went about as nurses, to tend those that were sick, they committed a great many petty thieveries in the houses where they were employed; and some of them were publicly whipt for it, when, perhaps, they ought rather to have been hanged[1] for examples, for numbers of houses were robbed on these occasions; till, at length, the parish officers were sent to recommend nurses to the sick, and always took an account who[2] it was they sent, so as that[3] they might call them to account, if the house had been abused where they were placed.

But these robberies extended chiefly to wearing clothes, linen, and what rings or money they could come at, when the person died who was under their care, but not to a general plunder of the houses; and I could give you an account of one of these nurses, who, several years after, being on her death-bed, confessed, with the utmost horror, the robberies she had committed at the time of her being a nurse, and by which she had enriched herself to a great degree; but as for murders, I do not find that there was[4] ever any proofs of the fact, in the manner as[5] it has been reported, except as above.

---

[1] Hanging was then a common punishment for even petty thefts.

[2] Of whom. [3] So that. [4] Were. [5] In which.

They did tell me, indeed, of a nurse in one place, that laid a wet cloth upon the face of a dying patient whom she tended, and so put an end to his life, who was just expiring before; and another that smothered a young woman she was looking to, when she was in a fainting fit, and would have come to herself; some that killed them by giving them one thing, some another, and some starved them by giving them nothing at all. But these stories had two marks of suspicion that always attended them, which caused me always to slight them, and to look on them as mere stories, that people continually frighted one another with. (1.) That, wherever it was that we heard it, they always placed the scene at the farther end of the town, opposite, or most remote from where you were to hear it. If you heard it in Whitechapel, it had happened at St. Giles's, or at Westminster, or Holborn, or that end of the town; if you heard it at that end of the town, then it was done in Whitechapel, or the Minories, or about Cripplegate parish; if you heard of it in the city, why then, it happened in Southwark; and if you heard of it in Southwark, then it was done in the city, and the like.

In the next place, of whatsoever part[1] you heard the story, the particulars were always the same, especially that of laying a wet double clout[2] on a dying man's face, and that of smothering a young gentlewoman; so that it was apparent, at least to my judgment, that there was more of tale than of truth in those things.[3]

A neighbour and acquaintance of mine, having some money owing to him from a shopkeeper in Whitecross Street, or thereabouts, sent his apprentice, a youth about eighteen years of age, to endeavour to get the money. He came to the door, and finding it shut, knocked pretty hard, and, as he thought, heard somebody answer within, but was not sure, so he waited, and after some stay, knocked

[1] Of the city.

[2] Cloth.

[3] By no means a necessary inference.

again, and then a third time, when he heard somebody coming down stairs.

At length the man of the house came to the door; he had on his breeches, or drawers, and a yellow flannel waistcoat, no stockings, a pair of slip shoes,[1] a white cap on his head, and, as the young man said, death in his face.

When he opened the door, says he, "What do you disturb me thus for?" The boy, though a little surprised, replied, "I come from such a one, and my master sent me for the money which he says you know of." "Very well, child," returns the living ghost, "call, as you go by, at Cripplegate church, and bid them ring the bell;" and, with these words, shut the door again, and went up again and died the same day, nay, perhaps the same hour. This the young man told me himself, and I have reason to believe it. This was while the plague was not come to a height; I think it was in June, towards the latter end of the month; it must have been before the dead-carts came about, and while they used the ceremony of ringing the bell for the dead, which was over for certain in that parish, at least, before the month of July; for, by the 25th of July, there died five hundred and fifty and upwards in a week, and then they could no more bury, in form,[2] rich or poor.

I have mentioned above, that, notwithstanding this dreadful calamity, yet that[3] numbers of thieves were abroad upon all occasions where they had found any prey; and that these were generally women. It was one morning about eleven o'clock, I had walked out to my brother's house in Coleman Street parish, as I often did, to see that all was safe.

My brother's house had a little court before it, and a brick wall and a gate in it; and, within that, several warehouses, where his goods of several sorts lay. It happened that in one of these warehouses were several packs of

[1] Slippers.

[2] With the proper rites.

[3] Yet.

women's high-crowned hats, which came out of the country, and were, as I suppose, for exportation ; whither I know not.

I was surprised, that when I came near my brother's door, which was in a place they called Swan Alley, I met three or four women with high-crowned hats on their heads, and, as I remembered afterwards, one, if not more, had some hats likewise in their hands ; but as I did not see them come out at my brother's door, and not knowing that my brother had any such goods in his warehouse, I did not offer to say anything to them, but went across the way to shun meeting them, as was usual to do at that time, for fear of the plague ; but, when I came nearer to the gate I met another woman, with more hats, come out of the gate. "What business, mistress," said I, "have you had there?" "There are more people there," said she ; "I have had no more business there than they." I was hasty to get to the gate then, and said no more to her ; by which means she got away. But, just as I came to the gate, I saw two more coming across the yard, to come out, with hats also on their heads, and under their arms ; at which I threw the gate too[1] behind me, which, having a spring-lock, fastened itself ; and, turning to the woman, "Forsooth," said I, "what are you doing here?" and seized upon the hats, and took them from them. One of them, who, I confess, did not look like a thief, "Indeed," says she, "we are wrong ; but we were told they were goods that had no owner ; be pleased to take them again, and look yonder, there are more such customers as we." She cried, and looked pitifully ; so I took the hats from her, and opened the gate, and bade them begone ; for I pitied the women indeed : but when I looked towards the warehouse, as she directed, there were six or seven more, all women, fitting themselves with hats, as unconcerned and quiet as if they had been at a hatter's shop, buying for their money.

I was surprised, not at the sight of so many thieves only, but at the circumstances I was in; being now to thrust myself in among so many people, who,[1] for some weeks, I had been so shy of myself, that if I met anybody in the street, I would cross the way from them.

---

[1] To.

They were equally surprised, though on another account. They all told me they were neighbours, that they had heard any one might take them, that they were nobody's goods, and the like. I talked big to them at first, went back to the gate, and took out the key, so that they were all my prisoners; threatened to lock them all into the warehouse, and go and fetch my lord mayor's officers for them.

They begged heartily, protested they found the gate open, and the warehouse door open, and that it had no doubt been broken open by some who expected to find goods of greater value; which, indeed, was reasonable to believe, because the lock was broke, and a padlock that hung to the door on the outside also loose, and not abundance of the hats carried away.

At length I considered that this was not a time to be cruel and rigorous; and besides that it would necessarily oblige me to go much about, to have several people come to me, and I go to several, whose circumstances of health I knew nothing of; and that, even at this time, the plague was so high as that there died four thousand a week; so that, in showing my resentment, or even in seeking justice for my brother's goods, I might lose my own life; so I contented myself with taking the names and places where some of them lived, who were really inhabitants in the neighbourhood, and threatening that my brother should call them to an account for it when he returned to his habitation.

Then I talked a little upon another footing with them; and asked them how they could do such things as these, in a time of such general calamity, and, as it were, in the face of God's most dreadful judgments, when the plague was at their very doors, and, it may be, in their very houses; and they did not know but that the dead-cart might stop at their doors in a few hours, to carry them to their graves.

---

[1] Whom,—referring, of course, to people in general.

I could not perceive that my discourse made much impression upon them all that while, till it happened that there came two men of the neighbourhood, hearing of the disturbance, and knowing my brother (for they had been both dependents upon his family), and they came to my assistance. These being, as I said, neighbours, presently knew three of the women, and told me who they were, and where they lived; and, it seems, they had given me a true account of themselves before.

This brings these two men to a farther remembrance. The name of one was John Hayward, who was at that time under-sexton of the parish of St. Stephen, Coleman Street; by under-sexton was understood at that time grave-digger and bearer of the dead. This man carried, or assisted to carry, all the dead to their graves, which[1] were buried in that large parish, and who were carried in form;[2] and, after that form of burying was stopt, went with the dead-cart, and the bell, to fetch the dead bodies from the houses where they lay, and fetched many of them out of the chambers and houses; for the parish was, and is, still remarkable, particularly, above all the parishes in London, for a great number of alleys and thoroughfares, very long, into which no carts could come, and where they were obliged to go and fetch the bodies a very long way, which alleys now remain to witness it; such as White's Alley, Cross Keys Court, Swan Alley, Bell Alley, White Horse Alley, and many more. Here they went with a kind of handbarrow, and laid the dead bodies on, and carried them out to the carts; which work he performed, and never had the distemper at all, but lived about twenty years after it, and was sexton of the parish to the time of his death. His wife at the same time was a nurse to infected people, and tended many that died in the parish, being for her honesty

[1] Who.

[2] With due rites.

recommended by the parish officers; yet she never was infected neither.[1]

He never used any preservative against the infection other than holding garlic and rue in his mouth, and smoking tobacco; this I also had from his own mouth; and his wife's remedy was washing her head in vinegar, and sprinkling her head-clothes so with vinegar as to keep them always moist; and if the smell of any of those she waited on was more than ordinary[2] offensive, she snuffed vinegar up her nose, and sprinkled vinegar upon her head-clothes, and held a handkerchief wetted with vinegar to her mouth.

It must be confessed, that, though the plague was chiefly among the poor, yet were the poor the most venturous[3] and fearless of it, and went about their employment with a sort of brutal courage. I must call it so, for it was founded neither on religion or prudence; scarce did they use any caution, but ran into any business which they could get any employment in, though it was the most hazardous; such was that of tending the sick, watching houses shut up, carrying infected persons to the pesthouse, and, which was still worse, carrying the dead away to their graves.

It was under this John Hayward's care, and within his bounds,[4] that the story of the piper, with which people have made themselves so merry, happened, and he assured me that it was true. It is said that it was a blind piper; but, as John told me, the fellow was not blind, but an ignorant, weak, poor man, and usually went his rounds about ten o'clock at night, and went piping along from door to door, and the people usually took him in at public houses where they knew him, and would give him drink and victuals, and sometimes farthings; and he in return would pipe and sing, and talk simply,[5] which diverted the people, and thus he lived. It was but a very bad time for this diversion, while things were as I have told, yet the poor fellow went about as usual, but was almost starved; and when anybody asked how he did, he would answer, the dead-cart had not taken him yet, but that they had promised to call for him next week.

---

[1] Still a colloquial idiom of the illiterate.

[2] Ordinarily.

[3] Venturesome.

[4] District.

[5] Foolishly.

It happened one night, that this poor fellow, whether somebody had given him too much drink or no (John Hayward said he had not drink in his house, but that they had given him a little more victuals than ordinary at a public-house in Coleman Street), and the poor fellow having not usually had a bellyful, or, perhaps, not[1] a good while, was laid all along upon the top of a bulk or stall, and fast asleep at a door, in the street near London Wall, towards Cripplegate, and that, upon the same bulk or stall, the people of some house, in the alley of which the house was a corner, hearing a bell, which they always rung before the cart came, had laid a body really dead of the plague just by him, thinking too that this poor fellow had been a dead body as the other was, and laid there by some of the neighbours.

Accordingly, when John Hayward with his bell and the cart came along, finding two dead bodies lie[2] upon the stall, they took them up with the instrument they used, and threw them into the cart; and all this while the piper slept soundly.

From hence they passed along, and took in other dead bodies, till, as honest John Hayward told me, they almost buried him alive in the cart, yet all this while he slept soundly; at length the cart came to the place where the bodies were to be thrown into the ground, which, as I do remember, was at Mountmill; and, as the cart usually stopt some time before they were ready to shoot out the melancholy load they had in it, as soon as the cart stopped, the fellow awaked, and struggled a little to get his head out from among the dead bodies, when, raising himself up in the cart, he called out, "Hey, where am I?" This frighted the fellow that attended about the work, but, after some pause, John Hayward, recovering himself, said, "Lord bless us! there's somebody in the cart not quite dead!" So another called to him, and said, "Who are you?" The fellow answered, "I am the poor piper. Where am I?" "Where are you!" says Hayward; "why, you are in the dead-cart, and we are going to bury you." "But I an't dead though, am I?" says the piper; which made them laugh a little, though, as John said, they were heartily frightened at first; so they helped the poor fellow down, and he went about his business.

---

[1] Not for.

[2] Lying.

I know the story goes, he set up his pipes in the cart, and frighted the bearers and others, so that they ran away; but John Hayward did not tell the story so, nor say anything of his piping at all; but that he was a poor piper, and that he was carried away as above, I am fully satisfied of the truth of.

It is to be noted here, that the dead-carts in the city were not confined to particular parishes, but one cart went through several parishes, according as the number of dead presented; nor were they tied[1] to carry the dead to their respective parishes, but many of the dead taken up in the city were carried to the burying ground in the out-parts for want of room.

At the beginning of the plague, when there was now no more hope but that the whole city would be visited; when, as I have said, all that had friends or estates in the country retired with their families, and when, indeed, one would have thought the very city itself was running out of the gates, and that there would be nobody left behind, you may be sure, from that hour, all trade except such as related to immediate subsistence, was, as it were, at a full stop.

This is so lively a case,[2] and contains in it so much of the real condition of the people, that I think I cannot be too particular in it; and, therefore, I descend to the several arrangements or classes of people who fell into immediate distress upon this occasion. For example,

---

[1] Bound.

[2] So striking a circumstance.

1. All master workmen in manufactures; especially such as belonged to ornament, and the less necessary parts of the people's dress, clothes, and furniture for houses; such as ribband weavers and other weavers, gold and silver lace makers, and gold and silver wire drawers, sempstresses, milliners, shoemakers, hat-makers, and glove-makers; also upholsterers, joiners, cabinet-makers, looking-glass-makers, and innumerable trades which depend upon such as these. I say the master workmen in such stopped their work, dismissed their journeymen and workmen, and all their dependents.

2. As merchandizing was at a full stop (for very few ships ventured to come up the river, and none at all went out), so all the extraordinary officers of the customs, likewise the watermen,[1] carmen,[2] porters, and all the poor whose labour depended upon the merchants, were at once dismissed, and put out of business.

3. All the tradesmen usually employed in building or repairing of houses were at a full stop, for the people were far from wanting to build houses, when so many thousand houses were at once stript of their inhabitants; so that this one article[3] turned out all the ordinary workmen of that kind of business, such as bricklayers, masons, carpenters, joiners, plasterers, painters, glaziers, smiths, plumbers, and all the labourers depending on such.

4. As navigation was at a stop, our ships neither coming in or going out as before, so the seamen were all out of employment, and many of them in the last and lowest degree of distress; and with the seamen were all the several tradesmen and workmen belonging to and depending upon the building and fitting out of ships; such as ship-carpen-

[1] Men plying boats on the river.

[2] Carters.

[3] This particular part of the circumstances.

ters, calkers, rope-makers, dry coopers,[1] sail-makers, anchor-smiths and other smiths; block-makers, carvers,[2] gunsmiths, ship-chandlers,[3] ship-carvers,[4] and the like. The masters of those, perhaps, might live upon their substance, but the traders were universally at a stop, and consequently all their workmen discharged. Add to these, that the river was in a manner without boats, and all or most part of the watermen, lightermen,[5] boat-builders, and lighter-builders, in like manner idle, and laid by.

5. All families retrenched their living as much as possible, as well those that fled as those that stayed; so that an innumerable multitude of footmen, serving men, shopkeepers, journeymen, merchants' book-keepers, and such sort of people, and especially poor maid-servants, were turned off, and left friendless and helpless without employment and without habitation; and this was really a dismal article.

I might be more particular as to this part, but it may suffice to mention, in general, all trades being stopt, employment ceased, the labour, and, by that, the bread of the poor, were cut off; and at first, indeed, the cries of the poor were most lamentable to hear; though, by the distribution of charity, their misery that way was gently[6] abated. Many, indeed, fled into the country; but thousands of them having stayed in London, till nothing but desperation sent them away, death overtook them on the road, and they served for no better than the messengers of death; indeed, others carrying the infection along with them, spread it very unhappily into the remotest parts of the kingdom.

The women and servants that were turned off from their places were employed as nurses to tend the sick in all places; and this took off a very great number of them.

---

[1] Coopers who make casks for articles that are not liquid.

[2] Carvers in wood.

[3] Dealers in cordage and similar necessaries for ships.

[4] Carvers of figureheads and other ornaments.

[5] Men working on lighters, barges used in unloading ships.

[6] Greatly ?

And which,[1] though a melancholy article in itself, yet was a deliverance in its kind, namely, the plague, which raged in a dreadful manner from the middle of August to the middle of October, carried off in that time thirty or forty thousand of these very people, which, had they been left, would certainly have been an insufferable burden, by their poverty; that is to say, the whole city could not have supported the expense of them, or have provided food for them; and they would, in time, have been even driven to the necessity of plundering either the city itself, or the country adjacent, to have subsisted themselves,[2] which would, first or last, have put the whole nation, as well as the city, into the utmost terror and confusion.

It was observable then that this calamity of the people made them very humble; for now, for about nine weeks together, there died near a thousand a day, one day with another; even by the account of the weekly bills, which yet, I have reason to be assured, never gave a full account by many thousands; the confusion being such, and the carts working in the dark when they carried the dead, that in some places no account at all was kept, but they worked on; the clerks and sextons not attending for weeks together, and not knowing what number they carried. This account is verified by the following bills of mortality.

		Of all Diseases.	*Of the Plague.*
From	*Aug.* 8 to *Aug.* 15	5319	3880
	———— to 22	5668	4237
	———— to 29	7496	6102
	Aug. 29 to *Sept.* 5	8252	6988
	———— to 12	7690	6544
	———— to 19	8297	7165
	———— to 30	6400	5533
	Sept. 27 to *Oct.* 3	5728	4929
	———— to 10	5068	4227
		59,918	49,605

---

[1] This fact.

[2] To obtain subsistence for themselves.

So that the gross[1] of the people were[2] carried off in these two months; for, as the whole number which was brought in to die of the plague was but 68,590, here is fifty thousand of them, within a trifle, in two months; I say fifty thousand, because as there wants 395 in the number above, so there wants two days of two months in the account of time.[3]

Now, when I say that the parish officers did not give in a full account, or were not to be depended upon for their account, let any one but consider how men could be exact in such a time of dreadful distress, and when many of them were taken sick themselves, and perhaps died in the very time when their accounts were to be given in; I mean the parish-clerks, besides inferior officers; for though these poor men ventured at all hazards,[4] yet they were far from being exempt from the common calamity; especially if it be true that the parish of Stepney had, within the year, 116 sextons, grave-diggers, and their assistants; that is to say, bearers, bell-men, and drivers of carts, for carrying off the dead bodies.

Indeed, the work was not of such a nature as to allow them leisure to take an exact tale of the dead bodies, which were all huddled together, in the dark, into a pit; which pit, or trench, no man could come nigh but at the utmost peril. I have observed often, that in the parishes of Aldgate, Cripplegate, Whitechapel, and Stepney, there were five, six, seven, and eight hundred in a week in the bills; whereas, if we may believe the opinion of those that lived in the city all the time, as well as I,[5] there died sometimes two thousand a week in those parishes; and I saw it under the hand[6] of one that made as strict an examination as he could, that there really died a hundred thousand people of the plague in it that one year; whereas, in the bills, the article of the plague was but 68,590.

---

[1] The greater part.

[2] Was.

[3] There seems, on the contrary, to be an excess of two days.

[4] Ran all risks.

[5] Mine.

[6] Positively stated in writing.

If I may be allowed to give my opinion, by what I saw with my eyes, and heard from other people that were eye-witnesses, I do verily believe the same, viz., that there died, at least, a hundred thousand of the plague only, besides other distempers ; and [1] besides those which [2] died in the fields and highways, and secret places, out of the compass of the communication, as it was called, and who were not put down in the bills, though they really belonged to the body of the inhabitants. It was known to us all, that abundance of poor despairing creatures, who had the distemper upon them, and were grown stupid or melancholy by their misery, as many were, wandered away into the fields and woods, and into secret, uncouth [3] places, almost anywhere, to creep into a bush or hedge, and die.

The inhabitants of the villages adjacent, would, in pity, carry them food, and set it at a distance, that they might fetch it if they were able, and sometimes they were not able ; and the next time they went, they would find the poor wretches lie [4] dead, and the food untouched. The number of these miserable objects were [5] many ; and I know so many that perished thus, and so exactly where, that I believe I could go to the very place and dig their bones up still ; for the country people would go and dig a hole at a distance from them, and then, with long poles and hooks at the end of them, drag the bodies into these pits, and then throw the earth in form, as far as they could cast it, to cover them ; taking notice how the wind blew, and so come on that side which the seamen call to windward, that the scent of the bodies might blow from them. And thus great numbers went out of the world who were never known, or any account of them taken, as well within the bills of mortality as without.

This, indeed, I had, in the main, only from the relation of others ; for I seldom walked into the fields, except towards Bethnal Green and Hackney ; or as hereafter.[6] But when I did walk, I always saw a great many poor wanderers at a distance, but I could know little of their cases; for, whether it were in the street or in the fields, if we had seen anybody coming, it was a general method to walk away; yet I believe the account is exactly true.

---

[1] "And" is here unnecessary.

[2] Who.

[3] Unknown, out of the way.

[4] Lying.

[5] Was.

[6] As I shall relate hereafter.

As this puts me upon mentioning[1] my walking the streets and fields, I cannot omit taking notice what a desolate place the city was at that time. The great street I lived in, which is known to be one of the broadest of all the streets of London, I mean of the suburbs as well as the liberties, all the side where the butchers lived, especially without the bars,[2] was more like a green field than a paved street, and the people generally went in the middle with the horses and carts. It is true, that the farthest end, towards Whitechapel church, was not all paved, but even the part that was paved was full of grass also; but this need not seem strange, since the great streets within the city, such as Leadenhall Street, Bishopsgate Street, Cornhill, and even the Exchange itself, had grass growing in them in several places; neither cart nor coach was seen in the streets from morning to evening, except some country carts to bring roots and beans, or pease, hay, and straw, to the market, and those but very few compared to what was usual. As for coaches, they were scarce used but to carry sick people to the pesthouse and to other hospitals, and some few to carry physicians to such places as they thought fit to venture to visit; for really coaches were dangerous things, and people did not care to venture into them, because they did not know who might have been carried in them last; and sick infected people were, as I have said, ordinarily carried in them to the pesthouses, and sometimes people expired in them as they went along.

It is true, when the infection came to such a height as I have now mentioned, there were very few physicians who cared to stir abroad to sick houses, and very many of the most eminent of the faculty were dead, as well as the surgeons also; for now it was indeed a dismal time, and, for about a month together, not taking any notice of the bills of mortality, I believe there did not die less than fifteen or seventeen hundred a day, one day with another.[1]

---

[1] Leads to my mentioning.

[2] The old city barriers.

One of the worst days we had in the whole time, as I thought, was in the beginning of September; when, indeed, good people were beginning to think that God was resolved to make a full end of the people in this miserable city. This was at that time when the plague was fully come into the eastern parishes. The parish of Aldgate, if I may give my opinion, buried above one thousand a week for two weeks, though the bills did not say so many; but it[2] surrounded me at so dismal a rate, that there was not a house in twenty uninfected. In the Minories, in Houndsditch, and in those parts of Aldgate parish about the Butcher Row, and the alleys over-against me, I say, in those places death reigned in every corner. Whitechapel parish was in the same condition, and though much less[3] than the parish I lived in, yet buried near six hundred a week, by the bills, and in my opinion, near twice as many; whole families, and, indeed, whole streets of families, were swept away together; insomuch, that it was frequent for neighbours to call to the bell-man to go to such and such houses and fetch out the people, for that they were all dead.

And, indeed, the work of removing the dead bodies by carts was now grown so very odious and dangerous, that it was complained of that the bearers did not take care to clear such houses where all the inhabitants were dead, but that some of the bodies lay unburied, till the neighbouring families were offended by the stench, and consequently infected. And this neglect of the officers was such that the churchwardens and constables were summoned to look after it; and even the justices of the hamlets were obliged to venture their lives among them, to quicken and encourage them; for innumerable of the bearers died of the distemper, infected by the bodies they were obliged to come so near; and had it not been that the number of people who wanted employment and wanted bread, as I have said before, was so great that necessity drove them to undertake anything and venture anything, they would never have found people to be employed; and then the bodies of the dead would have lain above ground and have perished and rotted in a dreadful manner.

---

[1] On the average.
[2] The plague.
[3] Less so.

But the magistrates cannot be enough commended in this, that they kept such good order for the burying of the dead that as fast as any of those they employed to carry off and bury the dead fell sick or died, as was many times the case, they immediately supplied the places with others, which, by reason of the great number of poor that was left out of business, as above,[1] was not hard to do. This occasioned that,[2] notwithstanding the infinite number of people which[3] died, and were sick, almost all together, yet they were always cleared away, and carried off every night; so that it was never to be said of London that the living were not able to bury the dead.

As the desolation was greater during those terrible times, so the amazement of the people increased; and a thousand unaccountable things they would do in the violence of their fright, as others did the same in the agonies of their distemper; and this part was very affecting. Some went roaring, and crying, and wringing their hands along the street; some would go praying and lifting up their hands to heaven, calling upon God for mercy. I cannot say, indeed, whether this was not in their distraction; but, be it so, it was still an indication of a more serious mind, when they had the use of their senses, and was much better, even as it was, than the frightful yellings and cryings that every day, and especially in the evenings, were heard in some streets. I suppose the world has heard of the famous

[1] As is stated above. [2] The fact that. [3] Who.

Solomon Eagle, an enthusiast ; he, though not infected at all, but in his head, went about, denouncing of judgment[1] upon the city in a frightful manner ; sometimes quite naked, and with a pan of burning charcoal on his head. What he said or pretended,[2] indeed, I could not learn.

I will not say whether that clergyman was distracted or not, or whether he did it out of pure zeal for the poor people, who went every evening through the streets of Whitechapel, and, with his hands lifted up, repeated that part of the liturgy of the church, continually, " Spare us, good Lord ; spare thy people whom thou has redeemed with thy most precious blood ; " I say, I cannot speak positively of these things, because these were only the dismal objects which represented[3] themselves to me as I looked through my chamber windows, for I seldom opened the casements,[4] while I confined myself within doors during that most violent raging of the pestilence, when, indeed, many began to think, and even to say, that there would none escape ; and, indeed, I began to think so, too, and, therefore, kept within doors for about a fortnight, and never stirred out. But I could not hold it.[5] Besides, there were some people, who, notwithstanding the danger, did not omit publicly to attend the worship of God, even in the most dangerous times. And, though it is true that a great many of the clergy did shut up their churches and fled,[6] as other people did, for the safety of their lives, yet all did not do so ; some ventured to officiate, and to keep up the assemblies of the people by constant prayers, and sometimes sermons or brief exhortations to repentance and reformation ; and this as long as they would hear them. And dissenters[7] did the like also, and even in the very churches where the parish ministers[1] were either dead or fled; nor was there any room for making any difference at such a time as this was.

---

[1] Denouncing judgment against—an old idiom. See *Deuteronomy* xxx. 18.

[2] What he pretended to be about.

[3] Presented.

[4] Windows swung on hinges and opening like double doors.

[5] Could not continue that practice.

[6] Flee.

[7] Those belonging to some other Protestant sect than the official Church of England.

It pleased God that I was still spared, and very hearty and sound in health, but very impatient of being pent up within doors without air, as I had been for fourteen days or thereabouts; and I could not restrain myself, but I would go[2] and carry a letter for my brother to the post-house: then it was, indeed, that I observed a profound silence in the streets. When I came to the post-house, as I went to put in my letter, I saw a man stand in one corner of the yard and talking to another at a window, and a third had opened a door belonging to the office. In the middle of the yard lay a small leather purse, with two keys hanging at it, with money in it, but nobody would meddle with it. I asked how long it had lain there; the man at the window said it had lain almost an hour, but they had not meddled with it, because they did not know but the person who dropt it might come back to look for it. I had no such need of money, nor was the sum so big, that I had any inclination to meddle with it, or to get the money at the hazard it might be attended with; so I seemed to go away, when the man who had opened the door said he would take it up; but so[3] that if the right owner came for it he should be sure to have it. So he went in and fetched a pail of water, and set it down hard by the purse, then went again and fetched some gunpowder, and cast a good deal of powder upon the purse, and then made a train from that which he had thrown loose upon the purse; the train reached about two yards; after this he goes in a third time, and fetches out a pair of tongs red-hot, and which he had prepared, I suppose, on purpose; and first setting fire to the train of powder, that singed the purse and also smoked the air sufficiently. But he was not content with that, but he then takes up the purse with the tongs, holding it so long till the tongs burnt through the purse, and then he shook the money out into the pail of water, so he carried it in. The money, as I remember, was about thirteen shillings, and some smooth groats[1] and brass farthings.[2]

---

[1] The parish churches and the officially recognized clergy were of the Church of England.

[2] But determined to go.

[3] But would so deal with it.

Much about the same time, I walked out into the fields towards Bow; for I had a great mind to see how things were managed in the river and among the ships; and as I had some concern in shipping, I had a notion that it had been[3] one of the best ways of securing one's self from the infection to have retired into a ship; and, musing how to satisfy my curiosity in that point, I turned away over the fields, from Bow to Bromley and down to Blackwall, to the stairs that are there for landing or taking water.[4]

Here I saw a poor man walking on the bank or sea-wall, as they call it, by himself. I walked awhile also about, seeing the houses all shut up; at last I fell into some talk, at a distance, with this poor man. First I asked how people did thereabouts? "Alas! sir," says he, "almost desolate, all dead or sick: here are very few families in this part, or in that village," pointing at Poplar, "where half of them are not dead already, and the rest sick." Then he, pointing to one house, "They are all dead," said he, "and the house stands open; nobody dares go into it. A poor thief," says he, "ventured in to steal something, but he paid dear for his theft, for he was carried to the churchyard too, last night." Then he pointed to several other houses. "There," says he, "they are all dead, the man and his wife and five children. There," says he, "they are shut up; you see a watchman at the door;" and so of other houses. "Why," says I, "what do you here all alone?" "Why," says he, "I am a poor, desolate man; it hath pleased God I am not yet visited, though my family is, and one of my children dead." "How do you mean then," said I, "that you are not visited?" "Why," says he, "that is my house," pointing to a very little, low, boarded house, "and there my poor wife and two children live," said he, "if they may be said to live; for my wife and one of the children are visited, but I do not come at them." And with that word I saw the tears run very plentifully down his face; and so they did down mine, too, I assure you.

---

[1] An English silver coin, not now in use, worth four-pence (about eight cents).

[2] The farthing, worth a quarter of an English penny, or about half a cent, is no longer coined.

[3] Would have been.

[4] "Taking water" is here probably equivalent to "taking to the water," or "getting down to the water," the opposite of "landing."

"But," said I, "why do you not come at them? How can you abandon your own flesh and blood?" "Oh, sir," says he, "the Lord forbid; I do not abandon them; I work for them as much as I am able; and, blessed be the Lord, I keep them from want." And with that I observed he lifted up his eyes to heaven with a countenance that presently[1] told me I had happened on a man that was no hypocrite, but a serious, religious, good man; and his ejaculation was an expression of thankfulness, that, in such a condition as he was in, he should be able to say his family did not want. "Well," says I, "honest man, that is a great mercy, as things go now with the poor. But how do you live then, and how are you kept from the dreadful calamity that is now upon us all?" "Why, sir," says he, "I am a waterman, and there is my boat," says he, "and the boat serves me for a house; I work in it in the day, and I sleep in it in the night, and what I get I lay it down upon that stone," says he, showing me a broad stone on the other side of the street, a good way from his house; "and then," says he, "I halloo and call to them till I make them hear, and they come and fetch it."

"Well, friend," says I, "but how can you get money as a waterman? Does anybody go by water these times?" "Yes, sir," says he; "in the way I am employed there does. Do you see there," says he, "five ships lie[1] at anchor," pointing down the river a good way below the town; "and do you see," says he, "eight or ten ships lie at the chain there, and at anchor yonder," pointing above the town. "All those ships have families on board, of their merchants and owners, and such-like, who have locked themselves up, and live on board, close shut in, for fear of the infection; and I tend on them to fetch things for them, carry letters, and do what is absolutely necessary, that they may not be obliged to come on shore; and every night I fasten my boat on board one[2] of the ship's boats, and there I sleep by myself, and, blessed be God, I am preserved hitherto."

---

[1] At once.

"Well," said I, "friend, but will they let you come on board after you have been on shore here, when this has been such a terrible place, and so infected as it is?"

"Why, as to that," said he, "I very seldom go up the ship side, but deliver what I bring to their boat,[3] or lie by the side and they hoist it on board: if I did, I think they are in no danger from me, for I never go into any house on shore, or touch anybody, no, not of my own family; but I fetch provisions for them."

"Nay," says I, "but that may be worse, for you must have those provisions of somebody or other; and since all this part of the town is so infected, it is dangerous so much as to speak with anybody; for the village," said I, "is as it were the beginning of London, though it be at some distance from it."

"That is true," added he, "but you do not understand me right. I do not buy provisions for them here; I row up to Greenwich, and buy fresh meat there, and sometimes I row down the river to Woolwich and buy there; then I go to single farm houses on the Kentish side, where I am known, and buy fowls, and eggs, and butter, and bring to the ships as they direct me, sometimes one, sometimes the other.[1] I seldom come on shore here ; and I came only now to call my wife and hear how my little family do, and give them a little money which I received last night."

---

[1] Lying.

[2] Fasten my boat to one.

[3] Deliver to (on) their boat what I bring.

"Poor man !" said I ; "and how much hast thou[2] gotten for them ?"

"I have gotten four shillings," said he, "which is a great sum, as things go now with poor men ; but they have given me a bag of bread, too, and a salt fish, and some flesh ; so all helps out."

"Well," said I, "and have you given it them yet ?"

"No," said he, "but I have called, and my wife has answered that she cannot come out yet, but in half an hour she hopes to come, and I am waiting for her. Poor woman !" says he, "she is brought sadly down ; she has had a swelling, and it is broke, and I hope she will recover, but I fear the child will die ; but it is the Lord !"—Here he stopt, and wept very much.

"Well, honest friend," said I, "thou hast a sure comforter, if thou hast brought thyself to be resigned to the will of God ; he is dealing with us all in judgment."

"Oh, sir," says he, "it is infinite mercy if any of us are spared ; and who am I to repine !"

"Say'st thou so," said I ; "and how much less is my faith than thine ?" And here my heart smote me, suggesting how much better this poor man's foundation was, on which he stayed in the danger, than mine ; that he had nowhere to fly ; that he had a family to bind him to attendance, which I had not ; and mine was mere presumption, his a true dependance, and a courage resting on God ; and yet, that he used all possible caution for his safety.

I turned a little way from the man, while these thoughts engaged me ; for, indeed, I could no more refrain from tears than he.

At length, after some further talk, the poor woman opened the door, and called, "Robert, Robert;" he answered, and bid[1] her stay a few moments, and he would come; so he ran down the common stairs to his boat, and fetched up a sack in which was[2] the provisions he had brought from the ships; and when he returned, he hallooed again; then he went to the great stone which he showed me, and emptied the sack, and laid all out, everything by themselves, and then retired; and his wife came with a little boy to fetch them away; and he called, and said such a captain had sent such a thing, and such a captain such a thing, and at the end adds, "God has sent it all, give thanks to him." When the poor woman had taken up all, she was so weak she could not carry it at once in, though the weight was not much neither;[3] so she left the biscuit, which was in a little bag, and left a little boy to watch it till she came again.

---

[1] Sometimes another.

[2] Note the use of the second person, then not uncommon in addressing inferiors and familiar friends.

"Well, but," says I to him, "did you leave her the four shillings, too, which you said was your week's pay?"

"Yes, yes," says he; "you shall hear her own it." So he calls again, "Rachel, Rachel," which, it seems was her name, "did you take up the money?" "Yes," said she. "How much was it?" said he. "Four shillings and a groat," said she. "Well, well," says he, "the Lord keep you all;" and so he turned to go away.

As I could not refrain from contributing tears to this man's story, so neither could I refrain my charity for his assistance; so I called him; "Hark thee, friend," said I, "come hither, for I believe thou art in health, that I may venture thee;"[4] so I pulled out my hand, which was in my pocket before. "Here," says I, "go and call thy Rachel once more, and give her a little more comfort from me. God will never forsake a family that trusts in him as thou dost;" so I gave him four other shillings, and bid him go lay them on the stone, and call his wife.

I have not words to express the poor man's thankfulness, neither could he express it himself but by tears running

[1] Bade. [2] Were. [3] Either. [4] Run my chances with thee.

down his face. He called his wife, and told her God had moved the heart of a stranger, upon hearing their condition, to give them all that money, and a great deal more such as that he said to her.[1] The woman, too, made signs of the like thankfulness, as well to heaven as to me, and joyfully picked it up; and I parted with no money all that year that I thought better bestowed.

I then asked the poor man if the distemper had not reached to Greenwich. He said it had not till about a fortnight before, but that then he feared it had; but that it was only at that end of the town which lay south towards Deptford Bridge; that he went only to a butcher's shop and a grocer's, where he generally bought such things as they sent him for, but was very careful.

I asked him, then, how it came to pass, that those people who had so shut themselves up in the ships had not laid in sufficient stores of all things necessary? He said some of them had, but, on the other hand, some did not come on board till they were frightened into it, and till it was too dangerous for them to go to the proper people to lay in quantities of things, and that he waited on two ships, which he showed me, that had laid in little or nothing but biscuit-bread and ship-beer,[2] and that he had bought everything else almost for them. I asked him if there were any more ships that had separated themselves as those had done. He told me, Yes, all the way up from the point, right against Greenwich, to within the shores of Limehouse and Redriff, all the ships that could have room rid[3] two and two in the middle of the stream; and that some of them had several families on board. I asked him if the distemper had not reached them. He said, he believed it had not, except two or three ships, whose people had not been so watchful as to keep the seamen from going on shore as others had been; and he said it was a very fine sight to see how the ships lay up the pool.[1]

---

[1] Evidently referring to the words of encouragement

[2] Probably beer intended to be used immediately, and not so prepared as to keep for a long while.

[3] Rode.

When he said he was going over to Greenwich, as soon as the tide began to come in, I asked if he would let me go with him and bring me back; for that I had a great mind to see how the ships were ranged, as he had told me. He told me, if I would assure him on the word of a Christian and of an honest man, that I had not the distemper, he would. I assured him that I had not; that it had pleased God to preserve me; that I lived in Whitechapel, but was too impatient of being so long within doors, and that I had ventured out so far for the refreshment of a little air, but that none in my house had so much as been touched with it.

"Well, sir," says he, "as your charity has been moved to pity me and my poor family, sure you cannot have so little pity left as to put yourself into my boat if you were not sound in health, which would be nothing less than killing me and ruining my whole family." The poor man troubled me so much when he spoke of his family with such a sensible concern and in such an affectionate manner, that I could not satisfy myself at first to go at all. I told him, I would lay aside my curiosity rather than make him uneasy; though I was sure, and very thankful for it, that I had no more distemper upon me than the freshest man in the world. Well, he would not have me put it off neither, but, to let me see how confident he was that I was just to him, he now importuned me to go; so, when the tide came up to his boat, I went in, and he carried me to Greenwich. While he bought the things which he had in charge to buy, I walked up to the top of the hill under which the town stands, and on the east side of the town, to get a prospect of the river; but it was a surprising sight to see the number of ships which lay in rows, two and two, and in some places, two or three such lines in the breadth of the river, and this not only up to the town, between the houses which we call Ratcliff and Redriff, which they name the pool, but even down the whole river, as far as the head of Long Reach, which is as far as the hills give[1] us leave to see it.

---

[1] The protected water just mentioned, and described more particularly below.

I cannot guess at the number of ships, but I think there must have been several hundreds of sail, and I could not but applaud the contrivance; for ten thousand people and more, who attended ship affairs,[2] were certainly sheltered here from the violence of the contagion, and lived very safe and very easy.

I returned to my own dwelling, very well satisfied with my day's journey, and particularly with the poor man; also, I rejoiced to see that such little sanctuaries were provided for so many families on board, in a time of such desolation. I observed also, that, as the violence of the plague had increased, so the ships which had families on board removed and went farther off, till, as I was told, some went quite away to sea, and put into such harbours and safe roads on the north coast as they could best come at.

But it was also true that all the people who thus left the land and lived on board the ships, were not entirely safe from the infection; for many died, and were thrown overboard into the river, some in coffins, and some, as I heard, without coffins, whose bodies were seen sometimes to drive up and down with the tide in the river.

But I believe I may venture to say, that, in those ships which were thus infected, it either happened where the people had recourse to them too late, and did not fly to the ship till they had stayed too long on shore, and had the distemper upon them, though perhaps they might not perceive it; and so the distemper did not come to them on board the ships, but they really carried it with them. Or, it was in these ships where the poor waterman said they had not had time to furnish themselves with provisions, but were obliged to send often on shore to buy what they had occasion for, or suffered boats to come to them from the shore; and so the distemper was brought insensibly among them.

---

[1] Gave.

[2] Who had to do with ships.

And here I cannot but take notice that the strange temper of the people of London at that time contributed extremely to their own destruction. The plague began, as I have observed, at the other end of the town, namely in Longacre, Drury Lane, etc., and came on towards the city very gradually and slowly. It was felt at first in December, then again in February, then again in April, and always but a very little at a time; then it stopped till May, and even the last week in May there were but seventeen in all that end of the town; and all this while, even so long as till there died above 3,000 a week, yet had the people in Redriff, and in Wapping and Ratcliff, on both sides the river, and almost all Southwark side, a mighty fancy that they should not be visited, or, at least, that it would not be so violent among them. Some people fancied the smell of the pitch and tar, and such other things, as oil, and resin, and brimstone, which is much used by all trades relating to shipping, would preserve them. Others argued it,[1] because it was in its extremest violence in Westminster, and the parish of St. Giles's and St. Andrew's, etc., and began to abate again, before it came among them, which was true, indeed, in part. For example:—

From the 8th to the 15th of August.				Total this week.
St. Giles's in the Fields	242	Stepney	197	4030
		St. Mag.[2] Bermondsey	24	
Cripplegate	886	Rotherhithe	3	
From the 15th to the 22nd of August.				**Total this week.**
St. Giles's in the Fields	175	Stepney	273	5319
		St. Mag. Bermondsey	36	
Cripplegate	847	Rotherhithe	2	

[1] Others so argued.

[2] St. Margaret's.

N. B. that[1] it was observed that the numbers mentioned in Stepney parish at that time were generally all on that side where Stepney parish joined to Shoreditch, which we now call Spitalfields, where the parish of Stepney comes up to the very wall of Shoreditch churchyard ; and the plague at this time was abated at St. Giles's in the Fields, and raged most violently in Cripplegate, Bishopsgate, and Shoreditch parishes, but there were not ten people a week that died of it in all that part of Stepney parish which takes in Limehouse, Ratcliff Highway, and which are[2] now the parishes of Shadwell and Wapping, even to St. Katherine's by the Tower, till after the whole month of August was expired ; but they paid for it afterwards, as I shall observe by and by.

This I say, made the people of Redriff and Wapping, Ratcliff and Limehouse, so secure, and flatter themselves so much with the plague's going off without reaching them, that they took no care either to fly into the country, or shut themselves up ; nay, so far were they from stirring that they rather received their friends and relations from the city into their houses ; and several from other places really took sanctuary in that part of the town, as a place of safety, and as a place which they thought God would pass over, and not visit as the rest was visited.

And this was the reason that, when it came upon them, they were more surprised, more unprovided, and more at a loss what to do than they[3] were in other places, for when it came among them really, and with violence, as it did, indeed, in September and October, there was then no stirring out into the country ; nobody would suffer a stranger to come near them,[4] no, nor near the towns where they dwelt ; and, as I have been told, several that wandered into the country on the Surrey side, were found starved to death in the woods and commons, that country being more open and more woody than any other part so near London, especially about Norwood, and the parishes of Camberwell, Dulwich, and Lusum, where, it seems, nobody durst relieve the poor distressed people for fear of the infection.

---

[1] Note well (*Nota Bene*) that.

[2] Forms.

[3] Than people were.

[4] Him.

This notion having, as I said, prevailed with the people in that part of the town, was in part the occasion, as I said before, that they had recourse to ships for their retreat; and where they did this early, and with prudence, furnishing themselves so[1] with provisions, so that they had no need to go on shore for supplies, or suffer boats to come on board to bring them; I say, where they did so, they had certainly the safest retreat of any people whatsoever: but the distress was such that people ran on board in their fright without bread to eat; and some into ships that had no men on board to remove them farther off, or to take the boat and go down the river to buy provisions, where it may be done safely; and these often suffered, and were infected on board as much as on shore.

As the richer sort got into ships, so the lower rank got into hoys,[2] smacks, lighters, and fishing-boats; and many, especially watermen, lay in their boats; but those made sad work of it, especially the latter, for, going about for provision, and perhaps to get their subsistence, the infection got in among them, and made a fearful havoc; many of the watermen died alone in their wherries, as they rid[3] at their roads, as well above bridge[4] as below, and were not found sometimes till they were not in condition for anybody to touch or come near them.

Indeed, the distress of the people at this seafaring end of the town was very deplorable, and deserved the greatest commiseration; but, alas! this was a time when every one's private safety lay so near them, that they had no room to pity the distresses of others; for every one had death, as it were, at his door, and many even in their families; and knew not what to do, or whither to fly.

---

[1] Thus.

[2] Small vessels, usually sloop-rigged.

[3] Rode.

[4] London Bridge.

This, I say, took away all compassion ; self-preservation, indeed, appeared here to be the first law. For the children ran away from their parents, as they languished in the utmost distress ; and, in some places, though not so frequent as the other, parents did the like to their children ; nay, some dreadful examples there were, and particularly two in one week, of distressed mothers, raving and distracted, killing their own children ; one whereof was not far off from where I dwelt, the poor lunatic creature not living herself long enough to be sensible of the sin of what she had done, much less to be punished for it.

It is not, indeed, to be wondered at ; for the danger of immediate death to ourselves took away all bowels [1] of love, all concern for one another. I speak in general ; for there were many instances of immovable affection, pity, and duty, in many, and some that came to my knowledge, that is to say, by hearsay ; for I shall not take upon me to vouch the truth of the particulars.[2] . . .

There is no room to doubt but the misery of those that gave suck was in proportion as great. Our bills of mortality could give but little light in [3] this ; yet some it did ; there were several more than usual starved at nurse ; but this was nothing. The misery was, where they were—first, starved for want of a nurse, the mother dying, and all the family and the infants found dead by them, merely for want ; and, if I may speak my opinion, I do believe that many hundreds of poor helpless infants perished in this manner. Secondly [4] (not starved but), poisoned by the nurse ; nay, even where the mother has been nurse, and having received the infection, has poisoned, that is, infected the infant with her milk, even before they knew they were infected themselves ; nay, and the infant has died in such a case before the mother. I cannot but remember to leave this admonition upon record, if ever such another dreadful visitation should happen in this city, that all women . . . that give suck should be gone, if they have any possible means, out of the place; because their misery, if infected, will so much exceed all other people's.

---

[1] A familiar biblical expression.

[2] Here follow detailed statistics in regard to the mortality among mothers and young infants.

[3] On.

[4] What follows should strictly be a part of the preceding sentence.

I could tell here dismal stories of living infants being found sucking the breasts of their mothers, or nurses, after they have been dead of the plague. Of a mother, in the parish where I lived, who, having a child that was not well, sent for an apothecary [1] to view the child, and when he came, as the relation [2] goes, was giving the child suck at her breast, and to all appearance was herself very well; but when the apothecary came close to her, he saw the tokens upon that breast with which she was suckling the child. He was surprised enough to be sure, but not willing to fright the poor woman too much, he desired she would give the child into his hand; so he takes the child, and going to a cradle in the room, lays it in, and, opening its clothes, found the tokens upon the child too, and both died before he could get home to send a preventive medicine to the father of the child, to whom he had told their condition. Whether the child infected the nurse-mother,[3] or the mother the child, was not certain, but the last most likely.

Likewise [4] of a child brought home to the [5] parents from a nurse that had died of the plague: yet the tender mother would not refuse to take in her child, and laid it in her bosom, by which she was infected and died, with the child in her arms dead also.

It would make the hardest heart move at the instances that were frequently found of tender mothers, tending and watching with their dear children, and even dying before them; and sometimes taking the distemper from them, and dying, when the child, for whom the affectionate heart had been sacrificed, has got over it and escaped.[1] . . .

---

[1] In old times the apothecary frequently performed many or all of the functions of the physician.

[2] The story. [3] Nursing-mother. [4] I could likewise tell. [5] Its.

I have heard also of some, who, on the death of their relations, have grown stupid with the insupportable sorrow; and of one in particular, who was so absolutely overcome with the pressure upon his spirits, that by degrees his head sunk into his body so between his shoulders that the crown of his head was very little seen above the bone of his shoulders; and by degrees, losing both voice and sense, his face looking forward, lay against his collar-bone, and could not be kept up any otherwise, unless held up by the hands of other people; and the poor man never came to himself again, but languished near a year in that condition, and died. Nor was he ever once seen to lift up his eyes, or to look upon any particular object.

I cannot undertake to give any other than a summary of such passages as these, because it was not possible to come at the particulars, where sometimes the whole families, where such things happened, were carried off by the distemper: but there were innumerable cases of this kind, which presented[2] to the eye and the ear, even in passing along the streets, as I have hinted above; nor is it easy to give any story of this or that family, which[3] there was[4] not divers parallel stories to be met with of the same kind.

But as I am now talking of the time when the plague raged at the easternmost parts of the town, how for a long time the people of those parts had flattered themselves that they should escape, and how they were surprised when it came upon them as it did; for, indeed, it came upon them like an armed man when it did come; I say, this brings me back to the three poor men who wandered from Wapping, not knowing whither to go or what to do, and whom

---

[1] Here follows an affecting incident of the death of a man through grief at the loss of his wife and little child under circumstances of peculiar horror.

[2] Presented themselves. [3] In regard to which. [4] Were.

I mentioned before;[1] one a biscuit-baker, one a sail-maker, and the other a joiner; all of Wapping or thereabouts.

The sleepiness and security of that part, as I have observed, was such that they not only did not shift for themselves, as others did, but they boasted of being safe, and of safety being with them; and many people fled out of the city, and out of the infected suburbs, to Wapping, Ratcliff, Limehouse, Poplar, and such places, as to places of security; and it is not at all unlikely that their doing this helped to bring the plague that way faster than it might otherwise have come. For, though I am much for people's flying away, and emptying such a town as this, upon the first appearance of a like visitation, and that all people, who have any possible retreat, should make use of it in time, and begone; yet I must say, when all that will fly are gone, those that are left, and must stand it, should stand stock still where they are, and not shift from one end of the town, or one part of the town, to the other; for that is the bane and mischief of the whole, and they carry the plague from house to house in their very clothes.

Wherefore were we ordered to kill all the dogs and cats, but because, as they were domestic animals, and are apt to run from house to house, and from street to street, so they are capable of carrying the effluvia or infectious steams of bodies infected, even in their furs and hair? and therefore it was, that in the beginning of the infection, an order was published by the lord mayor and by the magistrates, according to the advice of the physicians, that all the dogs and cats should be immediately killed, and an officer was appointed for the execution.

It is incredible, if their account is to be depended upon, what a prodigious number of those creatures were destroyed. I think they talked of forty thousand dogs, and five times as many cats, few houses being without a cat, some having several, sometimes five or six in a house. All possible endeavours were used also to destroy the mice and rats, especially the latter, by laying rat's-bane and other poisons for them, and a prodigious multitude of them were also destroyed.

---

[1] Page 57.

I often reflected upon the unprovided condition that the whole body of the people were in at the first coming of this calamity upon them, and how it was for want of timely entering into measures and managements, as well public as private, that all the confusions that followed were brought upon us; and that such a prodigious number of people sunk[1] in that disaster, which, if proper steps had been taken, might, Providence concurring, have been avoided, and which, if posterity think fit, they may take a caution and warning from; but I shall come to this part again.

I come back to my three men: their story has a moral in every part of it, and their whole conduct, and that of some whom they joined with, is a pattern for all poor men to follow, or women either, if ever such a time comes again; and if there was no other end in recording it, I think this a very just one, whether my account be exactly according to fact or no.

Two of them were said to be brothers, the one an old soldier, but now a biscuit-baker; the other a lame sailor, but now a sail-maker; the third a joiner. Says John, the biscuit-baker, one day to Thomas, his brother, the sail-maker, "Brother Tom, what will become of us? the plague grows hot in the city, and increases this way: what shall we do?"

"Truly," says Thomas, "I am at a great loss what to do, for, I find, if it comes down into Wapping, I shall be turned out of my lodging." And thus they began to talk of it beforehand.

John. Turned out of your lodging, Tom! If you are, I don't know who will take you in; for people are so afraid of one another now, there is no getting a lodging anywhere.

---

[1] Sank.

Tho. Why, the people where I lodge are good, civil people, and have kindness for me, too; but they say I go abroad every day to my work, and it will be dangerous; and they talk of locking themselves up, and letting nobody come near them.

John. Why, they are in the right, to be sure, if they resolve to venture staying in town.

Tho. Nay, I might even resolve to stay within doors, too, for, except a suit of sails that my master has in hand, and which I am just finishing, I am like to get no more work a great while;[1] there's no trade stirs now, workmen and servants are turned off everywhere, so that I might be glad to be locked up, too. But I do not see that they will be willing to consent to that any more than to the other.

John. Why, what will you do then, brother? and what shall I do? for I am almost as bad as you. The people where I lodge are all gone into the country, but a maid, and she is to go next week, and to shut the house quite up, so that I shall be turned adrift to[2] the wide world before you; and I am resolved to go away too, if I knew but where to go.

Tho. We were both distracted we[3] did not go away at first, when we might ha' travelled anywhere; there is no stirring now; we shall be starved if we pretend to go out of town; they won't let us have victuals, no, not for our money, nor let us come into the towns, much less into their houses.

John. And that which is almost as bad, I have but little money to help myself with, neither.

Tho. As to that, we might make shift; I have a little, though not much; but I tell you there is no stirring on the road. I know a couple of poor honest men in our street have attempted to travel; and at Barnet, or Whetstone, or thereabout, the people offered to fire at them, if they pretended to go forward; so they are come back again quite discouraged.

---

[1] For a great while.

[2] On.

[3] Out of our heads that we.

John. I would have ventured their fire, if I had been there. If I had been denied food for my money, they should have seen me take it before their faces; and if I had tendered money for it, they could not have taken any course with me by the law.

Tho. You talk your old soldier's language, as if you were in the Low Countries now; but this is a serious thing. The people have good reason to keep anybody off that they are not satisfied are sound, at such a time as this, and we must not plunder them.

John. No, brother, you mistake the case, and mistake me, too; I would plunder nobody; but for any town upon the road to deny me leave to pass through the town in the open highway, and deny me provisions for my money, is to say the town has a right to starve me to death, which cannot be true.

Tho. But they do not deny you liberty to go back again from whence you came, and therefore they do not starve you.

John. But the next town behind me will, by the same rule, deny me leave to go back, and so they do starve me between them; besides, there is no law to prohibit my travelling wherever I will on the road.

Tho. But there will be so much difficulty in disputing with them at every town on the road, that it is not for poor men to do it, or undertake it, at such a time as this is, especially.

John. Why, brother, our condition, at this rate, is worse than anybody's else; for we can neither go away nor stay here. I am of the same mind with the lepers of Samaria.[1] If we stay here, we are sure to die. I mean, especially as you and I are situated, without a dwelling-house of our own, and without lodging in anybody's else; there is no lying in the street at such a time as this; we had as good [2] go into the dead-cart at once. Therefore, I say, if we stay here we are sure to die, and if we go away we can but die; I am resolved to be gone.

---

[1] See *Luke* xvii. 11-19.

[2] Well.

Tho. You will go away. Whither will you go? and what can you do? I would as willingly go away as you, if I knew whither; but we have no acquaintance,[1] no friends. Here we were born, and here we must die.

John. Look you, Tom, the whole kingdom is my native country as well as this town. You may as well say, I must not go out of my house if it is on fire, as that I must not go out of the town I was born in, when it is infected with the plague. I was born in England, and have a right to live in it if I can.

Tho. But you know every vagrant person may, by the laws of England, be taken up, and passed back to their last legal settlement.

John. But how shall they make me vagrant? I desire only to travel on upon my lawful occasions.

Tho. What lawful occasions can we pretend to travel, or rather wander, upon? They will not be put off with words.

John. Is not flying to save our lives a lawful occasion? and do they not all know that the fact is true? We cannot be said to dissemble.

Tho. But suppose they let us pass; whither shall we go?

John. Anywhere to save our lives; it is time enough to consider that when we are got out of this town. If I am once out of this dreadful place, I care not where I go.

Tho. We shall be driven to great extremities. I know not what to think of it.

John. Well, Tom, consider of it a little.

This was about the beginning of July; and though the plague was come forward in the west and north parts of the town, yet all Wapping, as I have observed before, and Redriff, and Ratcliff, and Limehouse, and Poplar—in short, Deptford and Greenwich, both sides of the river from the Hermitage, and from over against it, quite down to Blackwall, was entirely free; there had not one person died of the plague in all Stepney parish, and not one on the south side of Whitechapel Road, no, not in any parish; and yet the weekly bill was that very week risen up to 1006.

---

[1] A collective noun.

It was a fortnight after this before the two brothers met again, and then the case was a little altered, and the plague was exceedingly advanced, and the number greatly increased. The bill was up at 2785, and prodigiously increasing; though still both sides of the river, as below, kept pretty well. But some began to die in Redriff, and about five or six in Ratcliff Highway, when the sail-maker came to his brother John, express,[1] and in some fright; for he was absolutely warned out of his lodging, and had only a week to provide himself. His brother John was in as bad a case, for he was quite out; and had only begged leave of his master, the biscuit-baker, to lodge in an outhouse belonging to his workhouse, where he only lay[2] upon straw, with some biscuit-sacks, or bread-sacks, as they called them, laid upon it, and some of the same sacks to cover him.

Here[3] they resolved, seeing all employment being[4] at an end, and no work or wages to be had, they would make the best of their way to get out of the reach of the dreadful infection; and being as good husbands[5] as they could, would endeavour to live upon what they had as long as it would last, and then work for more, if they could get work anywhere of any kind, let it be what it would.

While they were considering to put this resolution in practice in the best manner they could, the third man, who was acquainted very well with the sail-maker, came to know of the design, and got leave to be one of the number: and thus they prepared to set out.

It happened that they had not an equal share of money; but as the sail-maker, who had the best stock, was, besides his being lame, the most unfit to expect to get anything by working in the country, so he was content that what money they had should all go into one public stock, on condition that whatever any one of them could gain more than another, it should, without any grudging, be all added to the public stock.

---

[1] For that particular purpose.
[2] Lay only.
[3] Then.
[4] Was.
[5] See page 57, note 3.

They resolved to load themselves with as little baggage as possible, because they resolved at first to travel on foot, and to go a great way, that they might, if possible, be effectually safe. And a great many consultations they had with themselves before they could agree about what way they should travel, which they were so far from adjusting that, even to the morning they set out, they were not resolved on it.

At last, the seaman put in a hint that determined it. "First," says he, "the weather is very hot, and, therefore, I am for travelling north, that we may not have the sun upon our faces and beating upon our breasts, which will heat and suffocate us; and I have been told," says he, "that it is not good to overheat our blood at a time when, for aught we know, the infection may be in the very air. In the next place," says he, "I am for going the way that may be contrary to the wind as it may blow when we set out, that we may not have the wind blow the air of the city on our backs as we go." These two cautions were approved of, if it could be brought so to hit[1] that the wind might not be in the south when they set out to go north.

John, the baker, who had been a soldier, then put in his opinion. "First," says he, "we none of us expect to get any lodging on the road, and it will be a little too hard to lie just in the open air; though it may be warm weather, yet it may be wet and damp, and we have a double reason to take care of our healths at such a time as this; and, therefore," says he, "you, brother Tom, that are a sailmaker, might easily make us a little tent, and I will undertake to set it up every night, and take it down, and a fig for

[1] To coincide.

all the inns in England; if we have a good tent over our heads, we shall do well enough."

The joiner opposed this, and told them, let them leave that to him; he would undertake to build them a house every night with his hatchet and mallet, though he had no other tools, which should be fully to their satisfaction, and as good as a tent.

The soldier and the joiner disputed that point some time, but at last the soldier carried it for a tent; the only objection against it was that it must be carried with them, and that would increase their baggage too much, the weather being hot. But the sail-maker had a piece of good hap[1] fell[2] in, which made that easy; for his master, who[3] he worked for, having a rope-walk as well as[4] sail-making trade, had a little poor horse that he made no use of then, and being willing to assist the three honest men, he gave them the horse for the carrying their baggage; also, for a small matter of three days' work that his man did for him before he went, he let him have an old top-gallant sail that was worn out, but was sufficient, and more than enough, to make a very good tent. The soldier showed how to shape it, and they soon, by his direction, made their tent, and fitted it with poles or staves for the purpose, and thus they were furnished for their journey; viz., three men, one tent, one horse, one gun for the soldier, who would not go without arms, for now he said he was no more a biscuit-baker, but a trooper. The joiner had a small bag of tools, such as might be useful, if he should get any work abroad,[5] as well for their subsistence as his own. What money they had, they brought all into one public stock; and thus they began their journey. It seems that in the morning when they set out, the wind blew, as the sailor said, by his pocket-compass, at[6] N.W. by W.; so they directed, or rather resolved to direct, their course N.W.

---

[1] Good fortune. [2] Fall. [3] Whom. [4] As well as a.

[5] "Abroad" then meant out of one's native place, rather than out of one's native country. [6] The modern idiom omits "at."

But then a difficulty came in their way, that as they set out from the hither end of Wapping, near the Hermitage, and that[1] the plague was now very violent, especially on the north side of the city, as in Shoreditch and Cripplegate parish, they did not think it safe for them to go near those parts; so they went away east through Ratcliff Highway, as far as Ratcliff Cross, and leaving Stepney Church still on their left-hand, being afraid to come up from Ratcliff Cross to Mile End, because they must come just by the churchyard; and because the wind, that seemed to blow more from the west, blowed directly from the side of the city where the plague was hottest. So, I say, leaving Stepney, they fetched a long compass,[2] and going to Poplar and Bromley, came into the great road just at Bow.

Here the watch placed upon Bow Bridge would have questioned them; but they, crossing the road into a narrow way that turns out of the higher end of the town of Bow, to Oldford, avoided any inquiry there, and travelled on to Oldford. The constables everywhere were upon their guard, not so much, it seems, to stop people passing by, as to stop them from taking up their abode in their towns; and, withal, because of a report that was newly raised at that time, and that indeed was not very improbable, viz., that the poor people in London, being distressed, and starved for want of work, and, by that means, for want of bread, were up in arms, and had raised a tumult, and that they would come out to all the towns round to plunder for bread. This, I say, was only a rumour, and it was very well it was no more; but it was not so far off from being a reality as it has been thought, for in a few weeks more the poor people became so desperate by the calamity they suffered, that they were with great difficulty kept from running out into the fields and towns, and tearing all in pieces wherever they came; and as I have observed before, nothing hindered them but that the plague raged so violently, and fell in upon them so furiously, that they rather went to the grave by thousands than into the fields in mobs by thousands; for in the parts about the parishes of St. Sepulchre's, Clerkenwell, Cripplegate, Bishopsgate, and Shoreditch, which were the places where the mob began to threaten, the distemper came on so furiously that there died in those few parishes, even then, before the plague was come to its height, no less than 5361 people in the first three weeks in August, when, at the same time, the parts about Wapping, Ratcliff, and Rotherhithe were, as before described, hardly touched, or but very lightly; so that in a word, though, as I said before, the good management of the lord mayor and justices did much to prevent the rage and desperation of the people from breaking out in rabbles and tumults, and, in short, from the poor plundering the rich; I say, though they did much, the dead-cart did more, for, as I have said, that, in five parishes only, there died above 5000 in twenty days, so there might be probably three times that number sick all that time, for some recovered, and great numbers fell sick every day, and died afterwards. Besides, I must still be allowed to say that, if the bills of mortality said five thousand, I always believed it was twice as many in reality, there being no room to believe that the account they gave was right, or that, indeed, they were, among such confusions as I saw them in, in any condition to keep an exact account.

---

[1] As.

[2] See *Acts* xxviii. 13.

But to return to my travellers:—Here they were only examined, and as they seemed rather coming from the country than from the city, they found the people easier with them; that[1] they talked to them, let them come into a public-house where the constable and his warders were, and gave them drink and some victuals, which greatly refreshed and encouraged them; and here it came into their heads to say, when they should be inquired of afterwards, not that they came from London, but that they came out of Essex.

To forward this little fraud, they obtained so much favour of the constable at Oldford as to give them[2] a certificate of their passing from Essex through that village, and that they had not been at London; which, though false in the common acceptation of London in the country, yet was literally true; Wapping or Ratcliff being no part either of the city or liberty.

---

[1] So that.

[2] That he gave them.

This certificate, directed to the next constable, that was at Homerton, one of the hamlets of the parish of Hackney, was so serviceable to them that it procured them not a free passage there only, but a full certificate of health from a justice of the peace, who, upon the constable's application, granted it without much difficulty. And thus they passed through the long divided town of Hackney (for it lay then in several separated hamlets), and travelled on till they came into the great north road, on the top of Stamford Hill.

By this time they began to weary; and so, in the back road[1] from Hackney, a little before it opened into the said great road, they resolved to set up their tent, and encamp for the first night; which they did accordingly, with this addition, that, finding a barn, or a building like a barn, and first searching as well as they could to be sure there was nobody in it, they set up their tent with the head of it against the barn; this they did also because the wind blew that night very high, and they were but young at such a way of lodging, as well as at the managing their tent.

Here they went to sleep; but the joiner, a grave and sober man, and not pleased with their lying at this loose rate[2] the first night, could not sleep, and resolved, after trying it to no purpose, that he would get out, and taking the gun in his hand, stand sentinel, and guard his companions. So, with the gun in his hand, he walked to and again[3] before the barn, for that stood in the field near the road, but within[4] the hedge. He had not been long upon the scout[5] but[6] he heard a noise of people coming on as if it had been a great number, and they came on, as he thought, directly towards the barn. He did not presently[1] awake his companions, but in a few minutes more their noise growing louder and louder, the biscuit-baker called to him and asked him what was the matter, and quickly started out too. The other, being the lame sail-maker, and most weary, lay still in the tent.

---

[1] By-road.

[2] In this careless fashion.

[3] To and fro.

[4] On the inner side of.

[5] The watch.

[6] But that he heard; before he heard.

As they expected, so the people whom they had heard came on directly to the barn, when one of our travellers challenged, like soldiers upon the guard, with, "Who comes there?" The people did not answer immediately, but one of them speaking to another that was behind them, "Alas! alas! we are all disappointed," says he, "here are some people before us; the barn is taken up."

They all stopped upon that, as under some surprise; and it seems there were about thirteen of them in all, and some women among them. They consulted together what they should do; and by their discourse our travellers soon found they were poor distressed people, too, like themselves, seeking shelter and safety; and, besides, our travellers had no need to be afraid of their coming up to disturb them, for as soon as they[2] heard the words, "Who comes there?" they[3] could hear the women say, as if frightened, "Do not go near them; how do you know but they may have the plague?" And when one of the men said, "Let us but speak to them," the women said, "No, don't by any means; we have escaped thus far, by the goodness of God; do not let us run into danger now, we beseech you."

Our travellers found by this that they were a good sober sort of people, and flying for their lives as they were; and, as they were encouraged by it, so John said to the joiner, his comrade, "Let us encourage them too, as much as we can." So he called to them, "Hark ye, good people," says the joiner, "we find by your talk that you are flying from the same dreadful enemy as we are: do not be afraid of us, we are only three poor men of us; if you are free from the distemper you shall not be hurt by us; we are not in the barn, but in a little tent here on the outside, and we will remove for you; we can set up our tent again immediately anywhere else." And upon this a parley began between the joiner, whose name was Richard, and one of their men, whose said name was Ford.

---

[1] Immediately. [2] The new company. [3] The three travellers.

Ford. And do you assure us that you are all sound men?

Rich. Nay, we are concerned[1] to tell you of it, that you may not be uneasy, or think yourselves in danger; but you see we do not desire you should put yourselves into any danger, and, therefore, I tell you that we have not made use of the barn, so we will remove from it that you may be safe and we also.

Ford. That is very kind and charitable. But if we have reason to be satisfied that you are sound and free from the visitation, why should we make you remove, now you are settled in your lodging, and it may be are laid down to rest? We will go into the barn, if you please, to rest ourselves a while, and we need not disturb you.

Rich. Well, but you are more than we are; I hope you will assure us that you are all of you sound too, for the danger is as great from you to us, as from us to you.

Ford. Blessed be God that some do escape, though it be but few; what may be our portion still, we know not, but hitherto we are preserved.

Rich. What part of the town do you come from? Was the plague come to the places where you lived?

Ford. Ay, ay, in a most frightful and terrible manner, or else we had not fled away as we do; but we believe there will be very few left alive behind us.

Rich. What part do you come from?

Ford. We are most of us from Cripplegate parish, only two or three of Clerkenwell parish, but on the hither[2] side.

Rich. How, then, was it that you came away no sooner?

Ford. We have been away some time, and kept together as well as we could at the hither end of Islington, where we got leave to lie in an old uninhabited house, and had some bedding and conveniences of our own that we brought with us; but the plague is come up into Islington too, and a house next door to our poor dwelling was infected and shut up, and we are come away in a fright.

---

[1] Are anxious.

[2] On this side.

Rich. And what way are you going?

Ford. As our lot shall cast us, we know not whither; but God will guide those that look up to him.

They parleyed no farther at that time, but came all up to the barn, and with some difficulty got into it. There was nothing but hay in the barn, but it was almost full of that, and they accommodated themselves as well as they could, and went to rest; but our travellers observed that, before they went to sleep, an ancient man, who, it seems, was the father of one of the women, went to prayer with all the company, recommending themselves to the blessing and protection of providence before they went to sleep.

It was soon day at that time of the year; and as Richard, the joiner, had kept guard the first part of the night, so John, the soldier, relieved him, and he had the post in the morning, and they[1] began to be acquainted with one another. It seems, when they left Islington, they intended to have gone north a way to Highgate, but were stopped at Holloway, and there they would not let them pass; so they crossed over the fields and hills to the eastward, and came out at the Boarded River, and so, avoiding the towns, they left Hornsey on the left hand, and Newington on the right hand, and came into the great road about Stamford Hill on that side, as the three travellers had done on the other side. And now they had thoughts of going over the river in the marshes, and make[2] forwards to Epping Forest, where they hoped they should get leave to rest. It seems they were not poor, at least not so poor as to be in want: at least, they had enough to subsist them[3] moderately for two or three months, when, as they said, they were in hopes the cold weather would check the infection, or at least the violence of it would have spent itself; and would abate, if it were only for want of people left alive to be infected.

---

[1] John and the new people.

[2] Making.

[3] For them to subsist on.

This was much the fate of our three travellers; only that they seemed to be the better furnished for travelling, and had it in their view to go farther off; for as to the first, they did not propose to go farther than one day's journey, that so they might have intelligence every two or three days how things were at London.

But here our travellers found themselves under an unexpected inconvenience, namely, that of their horse; for, by means of the horse to carry their baggage, they were obliged to keep in the road, whereas the people of this other band went over the fields or roads, path or no path, way or no way, as they pleased; neither had they any occasion to pass through any town, or come near any town, other than to buy such things as they wanted for their necessary subsistence, and in that, indeed, they were put to much difficulty: of which in its place.

But our three travellers were obliged to keep the road, or else they must commit spoil, and do the country a great deal of damage, in breaking down fences and gates, to [1] go over inclosed fields, which they were loath to do if they could help it.

Our three travellers, however, had a great mind to join themselves to this company, and take their lot with them; and, after some discourse, they laid aside their first design, which looked northward, and resolved to follow the other into Essex; so in the morning they took up their tent and loaded their horse, and away they travelled all together.

They had some difficulty in passing the ferry at the riverside, the ferryman being afraid of them; but, after some parley at a distance, the ferryman was content to bring his boat to a place distant from the usual ferry, and leave it there for them to take it; so, putting themselves over, he directed them to leave the boat, and he, having another boat, said he would fetch it again; which it seems, however, he did not do for above eight days.

---

[1] In order to.

Here, giving the ferryman money beforehand, they had a supply of victuals and drink, which he brought and left in the boat for them, but not without, as I said, having received the money beforehand. But now our travellers were at a great loss and difficulty how to get the horse over, the boat being small and not fit for it; and at last could not do it without unloading the baggage and making him swim over.

From the river they travelled towards the forest; but when they came to Walthamstow, the people of that town denied[1] to admit them, as was the case everywhere; the constables and their watchmen kept them off at a distance, and parleyed with them. They gave the same account of themselves as before, but these gave no credit to what they said, giving it for a reason, that two or three companies had already come that way and made the like pretences, but that they had given several people the distemper in the towns where they had passed, and had been afterwards so hardly used by the country, though with justice too, as they had deserved, that, about Brentwood or that way, several of them perished in the fields; whether of the plague or of mere want and distress, they could not tell.

This was a good reason, indeed, why the people of Walthamstow should be very cautious, and why they should resolve not to entertain anybody that they were not well satisfied of; but, as Richard, the joiner, and one of the other men, who parleyed with them, told them, it was no reason why they should block up the roads, and refuse to let the people pass through the town, and[2] who asked nothing of them but to go through the street; that, if their people were afraid of them, they might go into their houses and shut their doors; they would neither show them civility nor incivility, but go on about their business.

---

[1] Refused.

[2] "And" is unnecessary.

The constables and attendants, not to be persuaded by reason, continued obstinate, and would hearken to nothing, so the two men that talked with them went back to their fellows, to consult what was to be done. It was very discouraging in [1] the whole, and they knew not what to do for a good while; but, at last, John, the soldier and biscuit-baker, considering awhile, "Come," says he, "leave the rest of the parley to me." He had not appeared yet; [2] so he sets the joiner Richard to work to cut some poles out of the trees, and shape them as like guns as he could, and, in a little time, he had five or six fair muskets, which at a distance would not be known; and about the part where the lock of a gun is, he caused them to wrap cloth and rags, such as they had, as soldiers do in wet weather to preserve the locks of their pieces from rust; the rest was discoloured with clay or mud, such as they could get; and all this while the rest of them sat under the trees by his direction, in two or three bodies, where they made fires at a good distance from one another.

While this was doing, he advanced himself, and two or three with him, and set up their tent in the lane, within sight of the barrier which the townsmen had made, and set a sentinel just by it with the real gun, the only one they had, and [3] who walked to and fro with the gun on his shoulder, so as that the people of the town might see them; [4] also he tied the horse to a gate in the hedge just by, and got some dry sticks together, and kindled a fire on the other side of the tent, so that the people of the town could see the fire and the smoke, but could not see what they were doing at it.

After the country people had looked upon them very earnestly a great while, and by all that they could see, could not but suppose that they were a great many in company, they began to be uneasy, not for [5] their going away, but for staying[1] where they were: and above all, perceiving they had horses and arms, for they had seen one horse and one gun at the tent, and they had seen others of them walk about the field on the inside of the hedge by the side of the lane with their muskets, as they took them to be, shouldered; I say, upon such a sight as this, you may be assured they were alarmed and terribly frightened; and it seems they went to a justice of the peace, to know what they should do. What the justice advised them to[2] I know not, but towards the evening, they called from the barrier, as above, to the sentinel at the tent.

---

[1] On.

[2] That is, he had not yet shown himself to the people of the town.

[3] "And" is unnecessary. [4] Himself and his party. [5] In regard to.

"What do you want?" says John.

"Why, what do you intend to do?" says the constable.

"To do," says John; "what would you have us to do?"

Const. Why don't you be gone? What do you stay there for?

John. Why do you stop us on the king's highway, and pretend to refuse us leave to go on our way?

Const. We are not bound to tell you the reason, though we did let you know it was because of the plague.

John. We told you we were all sound and free from the plague, which we were not bound to have satisfied you of; and yet you pretend to stop us on the highway.

Const. We have a right to stop it up, and our own safety obliges us to it; besides, this is not the king's highway, it is a way upon sufferance. You see here is a gate, and, if we do let people pass here, we make them pay toll.

John. We have a right to seek our own safety as well as you, and you may see we are flying for our lives, and it is very unchristian and unjust in you to stop us.

Const. You may go back from whence you came; we do not hinder you from that.

John. No, it is a stronger enemy than you that keeps us from doing that, or else we should not have come hither.

Const. Well, you may go any other way then.

John. No, no; I suppose you see we are able to send you going and all the people of your parish, and come through your town when we will, but, since you have stopt us here, we are content ; you see we have encamped here, and here we will live ; we hope you will furnish us with victuals.

---

[1] Their staying.

[2] To do.

Const. We furnish you ! What mean you by that ?

John. Why, you would not have us starve, would you ? If you stop us here you must keep us.

Const. You will be ill kept at our maintenance.

John. If you stint us, we shall make ourselves the better allowance.

Const. Why, you will not pretend to quarter upon us by force, will you ?

John. We have offered no violence to you yet, why do you seem to oblige us to it ? I am an old soldier and cannot starve ; and if you think that we shall be obliged to go back for want of provisions, you are mistaken.

Const. Since you threaten us, we shall take care to be strong enough for you. I have orders to raise the county upon you.

John. It is you that threaten, not we ; and, since you are for mischief, you cannot blame us if we do not give you time for it. We shall begin our march in a few minutes.

Const. What is it you demand of us ?

John. At first we desired nothing of you but leave to go through the town. We should have offered no injury to any of you, neither would you have had any injury or loss by us ; we are not thieves, but poor people in distress, and flying from the dreadful plague in London, which devours thousands every week. We wonder how you can be so unmerciful !

Const. Self-preservation obliges us.

John. What ! To shut up your compassion in a case of such distress as this ?

Const. Well, if you will pass over the fields on your left hand, and behind that part of the town, I will endeavour to have gates opened for you.

John. Our horsemen cannot pass with our baggage that way; it does not lead into the road that we want to go, and why should you force us out of the road? Besides, you have kept us here all day without any provisions but such as we brought with us; I think you ought to send us some provisions for our relief.

Const. If you will go another way, we will send you some provisions.

John. That is the way to have all the towns in the county stop up the ways against us.

Const. If they all furnish you with food, what will you be the worse? I see you have tents; you want no lodging.

John. Well; what quantity of provisions will you send us?

Const. How many are you?

John. Nay, we do not ask enough for all our company; we are in three companies; if you will send us bread for twenty men and about six or seven women for three days, and show us the way over the field you speak of, we desire not to put your people into any fear for us; we will go out of our way to oblige you, though we are as free from infection as you are.

Const. And will you assure us that your other people shall offer us no new disturbance?

John. No, no; you may depend on it.

Const. You must oblige yourself[1] too, that none of your people shall come a step nearer than where the provisions we send you shall be set down.

John. I answer for it we will not.

Here he called to one of his men, and bade him order Capt. Richard and his people to march the lower way on the side of the marshes, and meet them in the forest; which was all a sham, for they had no Capt. Richard or any such company.

Accordingly, they[2] sent to the place twenty loaves of bread and three or four large pieces of good beef, and opened some gates, through which they passed, but none of them had courage so much as to look out to see them go ; and, as it was evening, if they had looked, they could not have seen them so as to know how few they were.

---

[1] Make yourself responsible.

[2] The people of the town.

This was John the soldier's management ; but this gave such an alarm to the county that, had they really been two or three hundred, the whole county would have been raised upon them, and they would have been sent to prison, or perhaps knocked on the head.

They were soon made sensible of this ; for two days afterwards they found several parties of horsemen and footmen also about, in pursuit of three companies of men armed, as they said, with muskets, who were broke out from London and had the plague upon them ; and that were not only spreading the distemper among the people, but plundering the country.

As they saw now the consequence of their case, they soon saw the danger they were in ; so they resolved, by the advice also of the old soldier, to divide themselves again. John and his two comrades with the horse went away as if towards Waltham ; the other in two companies, but all a little asunder,[1] and went towards Epping.

The first night they encamped all in the forest, and not far off from one another, but not setting up the tent for fear that should discover them. On the other hand, Richard went to work with his axe and his hatchet, and, cutting down branches of trees, he built three tents or hovels, in which they all encamped with as much convenience as they could expect.

The provisions they had at Walthamstow served them very plentifully this night, and as for the next they left it to providence. They had fared so well with the old soldier's conduct that they now willingly made him their leader, and the first of his conduct appeared to be very good. He told them that they were now at a proper distance enough from London; that, as they need not be immediately beholden to the country for relief, they ought to be as careful the country did not infect them, as that they did not infect the country; that what little money they had they must be as frugal of as they could; that as he would not have them think of offering the country any violence, so they must endeavour to make the sense of their condition go as far with the country as it could. They all referred themselves to his direction; so they left their three houses standing, and the next day went away towards Epping; the captain also, for so they now called him, and his two fellow-travellers, laid aside their design of going to Waltham, and all went together.

---

[1] A short distance from each other.

When they came near Epping, they halted, choosing out a proper place in the open forest, not very near the highway but not far out of it, on the north side, under a little cluster of low pollard trees. Here they pitched their little camp, which consisted of three large tents or huts made of poles, which their carpenter, and such as were his assistants, cut down and fixed in the ground in a circle, binding all the small ends together at the top, and thickening the sides with boughs of trees and bushes, so that they were completely close and warm. They had besides this a little tent where the women lay by themselves, and a hut to put the horse in.

It happened, that the next day, or the next but one, was market-day at Epping, when Captain John and one of the other men went to market, and bought some provisions, that is to say, bread, and some mutton and beef; and two of the women went separately, as if they had not belonged to the rest, and bought more. John took the horse to bring it home, and the sack, which the carpenter carried his tools in, to put it in; the carpenter went to work, and made them benches and stools to sit on, such as the wood he could get would afford, and a kind of a table to dine on.

They were taken no notice of for two or three days, but after that abundance of people ran out of the town to look at them, and all the country was alarmed about them. The people at first seemed afraid to come near them ; and, on the other hand, they desired the people to keep off, for there was a rumour that the plague was at Waltham, and that it had been in Epping two or three days ; so John called out to them not to come to them. "For," says he, "we are all whole and sound people here, and we would not have you bring the plague among us, nor pretend we brought it among you."

After this the parish officers came up to them, and parleyed with them at a distance, and desired to know who they were, and by what authority they pretended to fix their stand at that place. John answered very frankly, they were poor distressed people from London, who, foreseeing the misery they should be reduced to, if the plague spread into the city, had fled out in time for their lives, and, having no acquaintance or relations to fly to, had first taken up at Islington, but, the plague being come into that town, were fled farther, and, as they supposed that the people of Epping might have refused them coming into their town, they had pitched their tents thus in the open field, and in the forest, being willing to bear all the hardships of such a disconsolate lodging, rather than have any one think, or be afraid, that they should receive injury by them.

At first the Epping people talked roughly to them, and told them they must remove ; that this was no place for them ; and that they pretended to be sound and well, but that they might be infected with the plague for aught they knew, and might infect the whole country, and they could not suffer them there.

John argued very calmly with them a great while, and told them that London was the place by which they, that is, the townsmen of Epping and all the country round them, subsisted, to whom they sold the produce of their lands, and out of whom they made the rents of their farms ; and to be so cruel to the inhabitants of London, or to any of those by whom they gained so much, was very hard; and they would be loath to have it remembered hereafter, and have it told, how barbarous, how inhospitable, and how unkind they were to the people of London, when they fled from the face of the most terrible enemy in the world: that it would be enough to make the name of an Epping man hateful throughout all the city, and to have the rabble stone them in the very streets, whenever they came so much as to market; that they were not yet secure from being visited themselves, and that, as he heard, Waltham was already; that they would think it very hard, that when any of them fled for fear before they were touched, they should be denied the liberty of lying so much as in the open fields.

The Epping men told them again, that they, indeed, said they were sound and free from the infection, but that they had no assurance of it; and that it was reported that there had been a great rabble of people at Walthamstow, who made such pretences of being sound as they did, but that they threatened to plunder the town, and force their way whether the parish officers would or no; that there were near two hundred of them, and had arms and tents like Low Country soldiers! that they extorted provisions from the town, by threatening them with living upon them at free quarter,[1] showing their arms, and talking in the language of soldiers; and that several of them having gone away towards Rumford and Brentwood, the country had been infected by them, and the plague spread into both those large towns, so that the people durst not go to market there as usual; that it was very likely they were some of that party; and if so, they deserved to be sent to the county gaol, and be secured till they had made satisfaction for the damage they had done, and for the terror and fright they had put the country into.

John answered, that what other people had done was nothing to them; that they assured them they were all of one company; that they had never been more in number than they saw them at that time (which by the way, was very true); that they came out in two separate companies, but joined by the way, their cases being the same; that they were ready to give what account of themselves anybody desired of them, and to give in their names and places of abode, that so they might be called to an account for any disorder that they might be guilty of; that the townsmen might see they were content to live hardly, and only desired a little room to breathe in on[1] the forest, where it was wholesome; for where it was not, they could not stay, and would decamp if they found it otherwise there.

---

[1] Quartering themselves on the town without pay.

"But," said the townsmen, "we have a great charge of poor upon our hands already, and we must take care not to increase it; we suppose you can give us no security against your being chargeable to our parish and to the inhabitants, any more than you can of being dangerous to us as to the infection."

"Why, look you," says John, "as to being chargeable to you, we hope we shall not; if you will relieve us with provisions for our present necessity, we will be very thankful; as we all lived without charity when we were at home, so we will oblige ourselves fully to repay you, if God please to bring us back to our own families and houses in safety, and to restore health to the people of London.

"As to our dying here, we assure you, if any of us die, we that survive will bury them, and put you to no expense, except it should be that we should all die, and then, indeed, the last man, not being able to bury himself, would put you to that single expense, which, I am persuaded," says John, "he would leave enough behind him to pay you for the expense of.

"On the other hand," says John, "if you will shut up all bowels of compassion, and not relieve us at all, we shall not extort anything by violence, or steal from any one;

---

[1] In.

but when that little we have is spent, if we perish for want, God's will be done."

John wrought so upon the townsmen, by talking thus rationally and smoothly to them, that they went away; and though they did not give any consent to their staying there, yet they did not molest them, and the poor people continued there three or four days longer without any disturbance. In this time they had got some remote acquaintance with a victualling-house on the outskirts of the town, to whom they called, at a distance, to bring some little things that they wanted, and which they caused to be set down at some distance, and always paid for very honestly.

During this time, the younger people of the town came frequently pretty near them, and would stand and look at them, and would sometimes talk with them at some space between; and particularly it was observed that the first Sabbath-day the poor people kept retired,[1] worshipped God together, and were heard to sing psalms.

These things, and a quiet inoffensive behaviour, began to get them the good opinion of the country, and the people began to pity them and speak very well of them; the consequence of which was, that, upon the occasion of a very wet rainy night, a certain gentleman, who lived in the neighbourhood, sent them a little cart with twelve trusses or bundles of straw, as well for them to lodge upon as to cover and thatch their huts, and to keep them dry. The minister of a parish not far off, not knowing of the other, sent them also about two bushels of wheat and half a bushel of white peas.

They were very thankful, to be sure, for this relief, and particularly the straw was a very great comfort to them; for, though the ingenious carpenter had made them frames to lie in, like troughs, and filled them with leaves of trees and such things as they could get, and had cut all their tent-cloth out to make coverlids, yet they lay damp and hard, and unwholesome till this straw came, which was to them like feather-beds; and, as John said, more welcome than feather-beds would have been at another time.

---

[1] In retirement; quietly.

This gentleman and the minister having thus begun, and given an example of charity to these wanderers, others quickly followed, and they received every day some benevolence or other from the people, but chiefly from the gentlemen who dwelt in the country round about: some sent them chairs, stools, tables, and such household things as they gave notice they wanted; some sent them blankets, rugs, and coverlids; some earthen ware, and some kitchen ware for ordering[1] their food.

Encouraged by this good usage, their carpenter, in a few days, built them a large shed or house with rafters, and a roof in form, and an upper floor, in which they lodged warm, for the weather began to be damp and cold in the beginning of September; but this house, being very well thatched, and the sides and roof very thick, kept out the cold well enough; he made also an earthern wall at one end, with a chimney in it; and another of the company, with a vast deal of trouble and pains, made a funnel to the chimney to carry out the smoke.

Here they lived comfortably, though coarsely, till the beginning of September, when they had the bad news to hear, whether true or not, that the plague, which was very hot at Waltham Abbey on the one side, and Rumford and Brentwood on the other side, was also come to Epping, to Woodford, and to most of the towns upon the forest; and which, as they said, was brought down among them chiefly by the higglers,[2] and such people as went to and from London with provisions.

If this was true, it was an evident contradiction to the report which was afterwards spread all over England, but, which, as I have said, I cannot confirm of my own knowledge, namely, that the market people, carrying provisions to the city, never got the infection, or carried it back into the country; both which, I have been assured, has been[1] false.

---

[1] Preparing.

[2] Hucksters.

It might be that they[2] were preserved even beyond expectation, though not to a miracle;[3] that abundance went and came and were not touched, and that was much encouragement for the poor people of London, who had been[4] completely miserable if the people that brought provisions to the markets had not been many times wonderfully preserved, or at least more preserved than could be reasonably expected.

But these new inmates began to be disturbed more effectually; for the towns about them were really infected, and they began to be afraid to trust one another so much as to go abroad for such things as they wanted, and this pinched them very hard, for now they had little or nothing but what the charitable gentlemen of the country supplied them with; but, for their encouragement, it happened that other gentlemen of the country, who had not sent them anything before, began to hear of them and supply them; and one sent them a large pig, that is to say, a porker;[5] another two sheep, and another sent them a calf; in short, they had meat enough, and sometimes had cheese and milk, and such things. They were chiefly put to it for bread, for when the gentlemen sent them corn, they had nowhere to bake it or to grind it; this made them eat the first two bushels of wheat that was sent them, in parched corn, as the Israelites of old did, without grinding or making bread of it.

At last they found means to carry their corn to a windmill, near Woodford, where they had it ground; and afterwards the biscuit-baker made a hearth so hollow and dry that he could bake biscuit-cakes tolerably well; and thus they came into a condition to live without any assistance or supplies from the towns ; and it was well they did, for the country was soon after fully infected, and about a hundred and twenty were said to have died of the distemper in the villages near them, which was a terrible thing to them.

---

[1] Have been; were.

[2] The market people.

[3] So far as to amount to a miracle.

[4] Would have been.

[5] Fat enough to kill.

On this they called a new council, and now the towns had no need to be afraid they should settle near them ; but, on the contrary, several families of the poorer sort of the inhabitants quitted their houses and built huts in the forest, after the same manner as they had done. But it was observed, that several of these poor people that had so removed had the sickness even in their huts or booths ; the reason of which was plain, namely, not because they removed into the air, but because they did not remove time[1] enough; that is to say, not till by openly conversing with other people, their neighbours, they had the distemper upon them, or, as may be said, among them, and so carried it about with them whither they went. Or, (2) because[2] they were not careful enough, after they were safely removed out of the towns, not to come in again and mingle with the diseased people.

But be it which of these it will, when our travellers began to perceive that the plague was not only in the towns but even in the tents and huts on the forest near them, they began then not only to be afraid, but to think of decamping and removing ; for, had they stayed, they would have been in manifest danger of their lives.

It is not to be wondered that they were greatly afflicted at being obliged to quit the place where they had been so kindly received, and where they had been treated with so much humanity and charity ; but necessity, and the hazard of life, which they came out so far to preserve, prevailed with them, and they saw no remedy. John, however, thought of a remedy for their present misfortune, namely, that he would first acquaint that gentleman who was their principal benefactor with the distress they were in; and [1]to crave his assistance and advice.

---

[1] In time.

[2] The following should strictly be a part of the preceding sentence.

This good charitable gentleman encouraged them to quit the place, for fear they should be cut off from any retreat at all, by the violence of the distemper; but whither they should go, that he found very hard to direct them to. At last John asked of him whether he, being a justice of the peace, would give them certificates of health to other justices who[2] they might come before, that so, whatever might be their lot, they might not be repulsed now they had been also so long from London. This his worship immediately granted, and gave them proper letters of health; and from thence they were at liberty to travel whither they pleased.

Accordingly, they had a full certificate of health, intimating that they had resided in a village in the county of Essex so long;[3] that being examined and scrutinized sufficiently, and having been retired from all conversation[4] for above forty days, without any appearance of sickness, they were, therefore, certainly concluded to be sound men, and might be safely entertained anywhere; having at last removed rather for fear of the plague, which was come into such a town, rather[5] than for having any signal of infection upon them, or upon any belonging to them.

With this certificate they removed, though with great reluctance; and John inclining not to go far from home, they removed toward the marshes on the side of Waltham. But here they found a man who, it seems, kept a weir or stop[6] upon the river, made to raise water for the barges which go up and down the river, and he terrified them with dismal stories of the sickness having been spread into all the towns on the river, and near the river, on the side of Middlesex and Hertfordshire; that is to say, into Waltham, Waltham Cross, Enfield, and Ware, and all the towns on the road, that they were afraid to go that way; though, it seems, the man imposed upon them, for that[1] the thing was not really true.

---

[1] Would.

[2] Whom.

[3] For such-and-such a time.

[4] Intercourse.

[5] An unnecessary repetition.

[6] A sort of lock.

However, it terrified them, and they resolved to move across the forest towards Rumford and Brentwood; but they heard that there were numbers of people fled out of London that way, who lay up and down in the forest reaching near Rumford; and who, having no subsistence or habitation, not only lived oddly,[2] and suffered great extremities in the woods and fields for want of relief, but were said to be made so desperate by those extremities as that they offered many violences to the country, robbed, and plundered, and killed cattle, and the like: and others, building huts and hovels by the road-side, begged, and that with an importunity next door to demanding relief: so that the country was very uneasy, and had been obliged to take some of them up.

This, in the first place, intimated to them that they would be sure to find the charity and kindness of the county, which they had found here where they were before, hardened and shut up against them: and that, on the other hand, they would be questioned wherever they came, and would be in danger of violence from others in like cases with themselves.

Upon all these considerations, John, their captain, in all their names, went back to their good friend and benefactor who had relieved them before, and laying their case truly before him, humbly asked his advice; and he as kindly advised them to take up their old quarters again, or, if not, to remove but a little farther out of the road, and directed them to a proper place for them; and as they really wanted some house, rather than huts, to shelter them at that time of the year, it growing on towards Michaelmas, they found an old decayed house, which had been formerly some cottage or little habitation, but was so out of repair as[3] scarce habitable; and by consent of a farmer, to whose farm it belonged, they got leave to make what use of it they could.

---

[1] For.

[2] Probably, from hand to mouth.

[3] As to be.

The ingenious joiner, and all the rest by his directions, went to work with it, and in a very few days made it capable to shelter them all, in case of bad weather; and in which there was an old chimney and an old oven, though both lying in ruins, yet they made them both fit for use: and raising additions, sheds, and lean-to's on every side, they soon made the house capable to hold them all.

They chiefly wanted boards to make window-shutters, floors, doors, and several other things: but as the gentleman above[1] favoured them, and the country was by that means made easy with them; and, above all, that[2] they were known to be all sound and in good health, everybody helped them with what they could spare.

Here they encamped for good and all, and resolved to remove no more; they saw plainly how terribly alarmed that country was everywhere at anybody that came from London; and that they should have no admittance anywhere but with the utmost difficulty, at least no friendly reception and assistance as they had received here.

Now although they received great assistance and encouragement from the country gentlemen, and from the people round about them, yet they were put to great straits, for the weather grew cold and wet in October and November, and they had not been used to so much hardship; so that they got cold in their limbs and distempers, but never had the infection. And thus, about December, they came home to the city again.

I give this story thus at large,[3] principally to give an account what[4] became of the great numbers of people which immediately appeared in the city as soon as the sickness abated; for, as I have said, great numbers of those that were able, and had retreats in the country, fled to those retreats. So when it was increased to such a frightful extremity as I have related, the middling people[5] who had not friends fled to all parts of the country where they could get shelter, as well those that had money to relieve themselves as those that had not. Those that had money always fled furthest, because they were able to subsist themselves;[1] but those who were empty, suffered, as I have said, great hardships, and were often driven by necessity to relieve their wants at the expense of the country. By that means the country was made very uneasy at them, and sometimes took them up, though even then they scarce knew what to do with them, and were always very backward to punish them; but, often too, they forced them from place to place, till they were obliged to come back again to London.

---

[1] Mentioned above.
[2] As.
[3] At length.
[4] Of what.
[5] People of the middle class.

I have, since my knowing this story of John and his brother, inquired and found that there were a great many of the poor disconsolate people, as above, fled[2] into the country every way;[3] and some of them got little sheds, and barns, and outhouses to live in, where they could obtain so much kindness of the country; and especially where they had any the least[4] satisfactory account to give of themselves, and particularly that they did[5] not come out of London too late.[6] But others, and that in great numbers, built themselves little huts and retreats in the fields and woods, and lived like hermits, in holes and caves, or any place they could find; and where, we may be sure, they suffered great extremities, such that many of them were obliged to come back again, whatever the danger was; and so those little huts were often found empty, and the country people supposed the inhabitants lay dead in them of the plague, and would not go near them for fear, no, not in a great while; nor is it unlikely but that[7] some of the unhappy wanderers might die so all alone, even sometimes for want of help, as particularly in one tent or hut was found a man dead; and, on the gate of a field just by, was cut with his knife in uneven letters the following words, by which it may be sup-

[1] By themselves.
[2] Who fled.
[3] In every direction.
[4] Any, even the least.
[5] Had.
[6] Very recently.
[7] Unlikely that.

posed the other man escaped, or that one dying first, the other buried him as well as he could :

O m I s E r Y !
We Bo T H Sh a L L D y E,
W o E, W o E

I have given an account already of what I found to have been the case down the river among the seafaring men, how the ships lay in the offing, as it is called, in rows or lines, astern of one another, quite down from the Pool as far as I could see. I have been told that they lay in the same manner quite down the river as low as Gravesend, and some far beyond, even everywhere, or in every place where they could ride with safety as to wind and weather ; nor did I ever hear that the plague reached to any of the people on board those ships, except such as lay up in the Pool, or as high as Deptford Reach, although the people went frequently on shore to the country towns and villages, and farmers' houses, to buy fresh provisions, fowls, pigs, calves, and the like, for their supply.

Likewise, I found that the watermen on the river above the bridge found means to convey themselves away up the river as far as they could go ; and that they had, many of them, their whole families in their boats, covered with tilts[1] and bales,[2] as they call them, and furnished with straw within for their lodging ; and that they lay thus all along by the shore in the marshes, some of them setting up little tents with their sails, and so lying under them on shore in the day, and going into their boats at night ; and in this manner, as I have heard, the river sides were lined with boats and people as long as they had anything to subsist on, or could get anything of the country ; and, indeed, the country people, as well gentlemen as others, on these and all other occasions, were very forward[3] to relieve them, but

[1] Awnings.

[2] Hoops for supporting a large covering, like that of a wagon.

[3] Ready.

they were by no means willing to receive them into their towns and houses, and for that we cannot blame them.

There was one unhappy citizen, within my knowledge, who had been visited in a dreadful manner, so that his wife and all his children were dead, and himself and two servants only left, with an elderly woman, a near relation, who had nursed those that were dead as well as she could. This disconsolate man goes to a village near the town, though not within the bills of mortality,[1] and finding an empty house there, inquires out the owner, and took the house. After a few days, he got a cart, and loaded it with goods, and carries them down to the house; the people of the village opposed his driving the cart along, but with some arguings, and some force, the men that drove the cart along got through the street up to the door of the house; there the constable resisted them again, and would not let them be brought in. The man caused the goods to be unloaded and laid at the door, and sent the cart away, upon which they carried the man before a justice of peace; that is to say, they commanded him to go, which he did. The justice ordered him to cause the cart to fetch away the goods again, which he refused to do; upon which the justice ordered the constable to pursue the carters and fetch them back, and make them reload the goods and carry them away, or to set them in the stocks till they came[2] for further orders; and if they could not find them, and the man would not consent to take them[3] away, they should cause them to be drawn with hooks from the house door and burnt in the street. The poor distressed man upon this fetched the goods again, but with grievous cries and lamentations at the hardship of his case. But there was no remedy, self-preservation obliged[4] the people to those severities, which they would not otherwise have been concerned in. Whether this poor man lived or died I cannot tell, but it was reported that he had the plague upon him at that time, and perhaps the people might report that to justify their usage of him ; but it was not unlikely that either he or his goods, or both, were dangerous, when his whole family had been dead of the distemper so little a while before.

---

[1] Not near enough to the town for deaths in it to be entered on the records of the town.

[2] Before the court.

[3] The goods.

[4] Forced.

I know that the inhabitants of the towns adjacent to London were much blamed for cruelty to the poor people that ran from the contagion in their distress, and many very severe things were done, as may be seen from what has been said ; but I cannot but say also, that where there was room for charity and assistance to the people, without apparent danger to themselves, they were willing enough to help and relieve them. But as every town were,[1] indeed, judges in their[2] own case, so the poor people who ran abroad in their extremities were often ill-used and driven back again into the town ; and this caused infinite exclamations and outcries against the country towns, and made the clamour[3] very popular.

And yet more or less, maugre[4] all the caution, there was not a town of any note within ten (or, I believe, twenty) miles of the city, but what was more or less infected, and had some died[5] among them. I have heard the accounts of several, such as they were[6] reckoned up, as follows :—

In Enfield	32
Hornsey	58
Newington	17
Tottenham	42
Edmonton	19
Barnet and Hadley	43
St. Albans	121
Watford	45
Uxbridge	117

---

[1] Was.

[2] Its.

[3] The outcry against the alleged cruelty of the towns.

[4] In spite of.

[5] Who died.

[6] Such as were.

In Hertford	90
Ware	160
Hodsdon	30
Waltham Abbey	23
Epping	26
Deptford	623
Greenwich	631
Eltham and Lusum	85
Croydon	61
Brentwood	70
Rumford	109
Barking, about	200
Brandford	432
Kingston	122
Staines	82
Chertsey	18
Windsor	103
	cum aliis.[1]

Another thing might render the country more strict with respect to the citizens, and especially with respect to the poor; and this was what I hinted at before, namely, that there was a seeming propensity, or a wicked inclination, in those that were infected to infect others.

There have been great debates among our physicians as to the reason of this: some will have it to be in the nature of the disease, and that it impresses every one that is seized upon by it with a kind of rage and a hatred against their own kind, as if there were a malignity, not only in the distemper to communicate itself, but in the very nature of man, prompting him with evil will, or an evil eye,[2] that as they say in the case of a mad dog, who, though the gentlest creature before of any of his kind, yet then will fly upon and bite any one that comes next[3] him, and those[4]

[1] With others.

[2] That is, with a desire to use the baleful powers that belonged to an "evil eye."

[3] Nearest.

[4] Those nearest him.

as soon as any who have been most observed by him before.

Others placed it to the account of the corruption of human nature, who[1] cannot bear to see itself more miserable than others of its own species, and has a kind of involuntary wish that all men were as unhappy or in as bad a condition as itself.

Others say it was only a kind of desperation, not knowing[2] or regarding what they did, and consequently unconcerned at the danger or safety, not only of anybody near them, but even of themselves also. And, indeed, when men are once come to a condition to[3] abandon themselves, and be unconcerned for the safety or at the danger of themselves, it cannot be so much wondered that they should be careless of the safety of other people.

But I choose to give this grave debate quite a different turn, and answer it or resolve it all by saying that I do not grant the fact. On the contrary, I say that the thing is not really so, but that it was a general complaint raised by the people inhabiting the out-lying villages against the citizens, to justify, or at least excuse, those hardships and severities so much talked of, and in which complaints both sides may be said to have injured one another; that is to say, the citizens, pressing to be received and harboured in time of distress, and with the plague upon them, complain of the cruelty and injustice of the country people, in being refused entrance, and forced back again with their goods and families; and the inhabitants, finding themselves so imposed upon, and the citizens breaking in as it were upon them, whether they would or no, complain that when they[4] were infected they were not only regardless of others, but even willing to infect them: neither of which was really true, that is to say, in the colours they[5] were described in.

---

[1] The relative, and the pronouns that follow it, refer partly to "human nature," partly to some word like "man," to which it is assumed to be equivalent.

[2] Men not knowing

[3] To such a condition as to.

[4] The citizens.

[5] The preceding statements.

It is true there is something to be said for the frequent alarms which were given to the country of the resolution of the people of London to come out by force, not only for relief, but to plunder and rob, that[1] they ran about the streets with the distemper upon them without any control, and that no care was taken to shut up houses, and confine the sick people from infecting others; whereas, to do the Londoners justice, they never practised such things, except in such particular cases as I have mentioned above, and such like. On the other hand, everything was managed with so much care, and such excellent order was observed in the whole city and suburbs, by the care of the lord mayor and aldermen, and by the justices of the peace, churchwardens, etc., in the out-parts, that London may be a pattern to all the cities in the world for the good government and the excellent order that was everywhere kept, even in the time of the most violent infection, and when the people were in the utmost consternation and distress. But of this I shall speak by itself.

One thing, it is to be observed, was owing principally to the prudence of the magistrates, and ought to be mentioned to their honour, viz., the moderation which they used in the great and difficult work of shutting up houses. It is true, as I have mentioned,[2] that the shutting up of houses was a great subject of discontent, and I may say, indeed, the only subject of discontent among the people at that time; for the confining the sound in the same house with the sick was counted very terrible, and the complaints of people so confined were very grievous; they were heard in the very streets, and they were sometimes such that called for resentment, though oftener for compassion; they had no way to converse with any of their friends but out of their windows, where they would make such piteous lamentations as often moved the hearts of those they talked with, and of others who, passing by, heard their story; and as those complaints oftentimes reproached the severity, and sometimes the insolence, of the watchmen placed at their doors, those watchmen would answer saucily enough, and perhaps be apt to affront the people who were in the street talking to the said families, for which, or for their ill-treatment of the families, I think seven or eight of them in several places were killed; I know not whether I should say murdered or not, because I cannot enter into the particular cases. It is true, the watchmen were on their duty, and acting in the post where they were placed by a lawful authority: and killing any public legal officer in the execution of his office is always, in the language of the law, called murder. But as they were not authorized by the magistrate's instructions, or by the power they acted under, to be injurious or abusive, either to the people who were under their observation, or to any that concerned themselves for them, so that when they did so they might be said to act themselves, not their office, to act as private persons, not as persons employed, and consequently, if they brought mischief upon themselves by such an undue behaviour, that mischief was upon their own heads; and, indeed, they had so much the hearty curses of the people, whether they deserved it or not, that whatever befell them nobody pitied them, and everybody was apt to say they deserved it, whatever it was; nor do I remember that anybody was ever punished, at least to any considerable degree, for whatever was done to the watchmen that guarded their houses.

---

[1] Alarms, that.

[2] See page 49.

What variety of stratagems were[1] used to escape and get out of houses thus shut up, by which the watchmen were deceived or overpowered, and that[2] the people got away, I have taken notice of already,[3] and shall say no more to that; but I say the magistrates did moderate and ease families upon many occasions in this case, and particularly in that of taking away or suffering to be removed the sick persons out of such houses, when they were willing to be removed, either to a pest-house or other places, and sometimes giving the well persons in the family so shut up leave to remove upon information given that they were well, and that they would confine themselves in such houses where they went so long as should be required of them. The concern also of the magistrates for the supplying such poor families as were infected, I say, supplying them with necessaries, as well physic as food, was very great, and in which[1] they did not content themselves with giving the necessary orders to the officers appointed, but the aldermen in person, and on horseback, frequently rode to such houses and caused the people to be asked at their windows whether they were duly attended or not; also whether they wanted anything that was necessary, and if the officers had constantly carried their messages, and fetched them such things as they wanted, or not; and if they answered in the affirmative, all was well; but if they complained that they were ill-supplied, and that the officer did not do his duty, or did not treat them civilly, they (the officers) were generally removed, and others placed in their stead.

---

[1] Was.

[2] The fact that.

[3] See page 52.

It is true such complaint might be unjust, and if the officer had such arguments to use as would convince the magistrate that he was right, and that the people had injured him, he was continued and they reproved. But this part could not well bear a particular inquiry, for the parties could very ill be well heard and answered in the street from the windows, as was the case then; the magistrates therefore generally chose to favour the people, and remove the man, as what seemed to be the least wrong, and of the least ill consequence; seeing, if the watchman was injured, yet they could easily make him amends by giving him another post of a like nature; but if the family was injured, there was no satisfaction could be made to them, the damage perhaps being irreparable, as it concerned their lives.

A great variety of these cases frequently happened between the watchmen and the poor people shut up, besides those I formerly mentioned about escaping; sometimes the watchmen were absent, sometimes drunk, sometimes asleep when the people wanted them, and such never failed to be punished severely, as indeed they deserved.

---

[1] In such cases.

But, after all that was or could be done in these cases, the shutting up of houses, so as to confine those that were well with those that were sick, had very great inconveniences in it, and some that were very tragical, and which merited to have been considered if there had been room for it; but it was authorized by a law, it had the public good in view, as the end chiefly aimed at, and all the private injuries that were done by the putting it in execution must be put to the account of the public benefit.

It is doubtful whether, in the whole, it contributed anything to the stop of the infection, and, indeed, I cannot say it did; for nothing could run with greater fury and rage than the infection did when it was in its chief violence; though the houses infected were shut up as exactly and effectually as it was possible. Certain it is, that if all the infected persons were effectually shut in, no sound person could have been infected by them, because they could not have come near them.[1] But the case[2] was this, and I shall only touch it here, namely, that the infection was propagated insensibly, and by such persons as were not visibly infected, who neither knew whom they infected, nor whom they were infected by.

A house in Whitechapel was shut up for the sake of one infected maid, who had only spots, not the tokens, come out upon her, and recovered; yet these people obtained no liberty to stir, neither for air or exercise forty days;[3] want of breath,[4] fear, anger, vexation, and all the other griefs attending such an injurious treatment, cast the mistress of the family into a fever; and visitors[5] came into the house and said it was the plague, though the physicians declared it was not; however, the family were obliged to begin their quarantine anew, on the report of the visitor or examiner, though their former quarantine wanted but a few days of being finished. This oppressed them so with anger and grief, and, as before, straitened them also so much as to room, and for want of breathing and free air, that most of the family fell sick, one of one distemper, one of another, chiefly scorbutic ailments,[1] only one a[2] violent cholic, until after several prolongings of their confinement, some or other of those that came in with the visitors to inspect the persons that were ill, in hopes of releasing them, brought the distemper with them, and infected the whole house, and all or most of them died, not of the plague as really upon them before, but of the plague that those people brought them, who should have been careful to have protected them from it; and this was a thing which frequently happened, and was, indeed, one of the worst consequences of shutting houses up.

---

[1] Unless, as we now understand, the germs of the disease were conveyed otherwise than by contact between infected persons.

[2] Point.

[3] For forty days.

[4] Want of fresh air.

[5] The official examiners.

I had about this time a little hardship put upon me, which I was at first greatly afflicted at, and very much disturbed about, though, as it proved, it did not expose me to any disaster; and this was, being appointed, by the alderman of Portsoken ward, one of the examiners of the houses in the precinct where I lived; we had a large parish, and had no less than eighteen examiners, as the order[3] called us: the people called us visitors. I endeavoured with all my might to be excused from such an employment, and used many arguments with the alderman's deputy to be excused; particularly, I alleged, that I was against shutting up houses at all, and that it would be very hard to oblige me to be an instrument in that which was against my judgment, and which I did verily believe would not answer the end it was intended for; but all the abatement I could get was only that, whereas the officer was appointed by my lord mayor to continue two months, I should be obliged to hold it but three weeks, on condition, nevertheless, that I could then get some other sufficient housekeeper to serve the rest of the time for me, which was, in short, but a very small favour, it being very difficult to get any man to accept of such an employment, that was fit to be intrusted with it.

---

[1] The scurvy, or similar diseases.

[2] Of a.

[3] The official appointment.

It is true, that shutting up of houses had one effect, which I am sensible was of moment, namely, it confined the distempered people, who would otherwise have been both very troublesome and very dangerous in their running about streets with the distemper upon them : which, when they were delirious, they would have done in a most frightful manner as, indeed, they began to do at first very much, until they were restrained ; nay, so very open they were, that the poor would go about and beg at people's doors, and say they had the plague upon them, and beg rags for their sores, or both, or anything that delirious nature happened to think of.

A poor unhappy gentlewoman, a substantial citizen's wife, was, if the story be true, murdered by one of these creatures in Aldersgate Street, or that way.[1] He was going along the street, raving mad to be sure, and singing ; the people only said he was drunk,[2] but he himself said he had the plague upon him, which, it seems, was true ; and meeting this gentlewoman, he would kiss her ; she was terribly frightened, as he was a rude fellow, and she run from him ; but the street being very thin of people, there was nobody near enough to help her ; when she saw he would overtake her, she turned and gave him a thrust, so forcibly, he being but weak, as pushed him down backward ; but very unhappily, she being so near, he caught hold of her, and pulled her down also ; and getting up first, mastered her, and kissed her ; and which was worst of all, when he had done, told her he had the plague, and why should not she have it as well as he ? She was frightened enough before

---

[1] In that vicinity.

[2] Said he was only drunk.

. . . but when she heard him say he had the plague, she screamed out and fell down into a swoon, or in a fit, which, though she recovered a little, yet killed her in a very few days, and I never heard whether she had the plague or no.

Another infected person came and knocked at the door of a citizen's house, where they knew him very well; the servant let him in, and being told the master of the house was above, he ran up, and came into the room to them as the whole family were at supper. They began to rise up a little surprised, not knowing what the matter was; but he bid them sit still, he only come[1] to take his leave of them. They asked him, "Why, Mr. ——, where are you going?" "Going!" says he, "I have got the sickness, and shall die to-morrow night." It is easy to believe, though not to describe, the consternation they were all in; the women and the man's daughters, which[2] were but little girls, were frightened almost to death, and got up, one running out at one door, and one at another, some downstairs and some upstairs, and getting together as well as they could, locked themselves into their chambers, and screamed out at the windows for help, as if they had been frightened out of their wits. The master, more composed than they, though both frightened and provoked, was going to lay hands on him and throw him down stairs, being in a passion; but then, considering a little the condition of the man, and the danger of touching him, horror seized his mind, and he stood still like one astonished. The poor distempered man, all this while, being as well diseased in his brain as in his body, stood still like one amazed; at length he turns round; "Ay!" says he, with all the seeming calmness imaginable, "is it so with you all? Are you all disturbed at me? Why, then I'll e'en go home and die there." And so he goes immediately down stairs. The servant that had let him in goes down after him with a candle, but was afraid to go past him and open the door, so he stood on the stairs to see what he would do; the man went and opened the door, and went out and flung [1] the door after him. It was some while before the family recovered [2] the fright; but as no ill consequence attended, they have had occasion since to speak of it, you may be sure, with great satisfaction; though the man was gone, it was some time, nay, as I heard, some days, before they recovered themselves of the hurry [3] they were in; nor did they go up and down the house with any assurance till they had burnt a great variety of fumes and perfumes in all the rooms, and made a great many smokes of pitch, of gunpowder, and of sulphur; all separately shifted,[4] and washed their clothes, and the like. As to the poor man, whether he lived or died I do not remember.

---

[1] Came.

[2] Who.

It is most certain, that if, by the shutting up of houses, the sick had not been confined, multitudes, who in the height of their fever were delirious and distracted, would have been continually running up and down the streets; and, even as it was, a very great number did so, and offered all sorts of violence to those they met, even just as a mad dog runs on and bites at every one he meets; nor can I doubt but that should one of those infected diseased creatures have bitten any man or woman, while the frenzy of the distemper was upon them, they, I mean the person so wounded, would as certainly have been incurably infected, as one that was sick before, and had the tokens upon him.

I heard of one infected creature, who, running out of his bed in his shirt, in the anguish and agony of his swellings, of which he had three upon him, got his shoes on and went to put on his coat, but the nurse resisting and snatching the coat from him, he threw her down, run over her, ran down stairs, and into the street directly to the Thames, in his shirt, the nurse running after him, and calling to the watch to stop him; but the watchman, frightened at the man, and afraid to touch him, let him go on; upon which he ran down to the Still-Yard Stairs, threw away his shirt, and plunged into the Thames; and, being a good swimmer, swam quite over the river; and the tide being coming in, as they call it, that is, running westward, he reached the land not till he came about the Falcon Stairs, where landing, and finding no people there, it being in the night, he ran about the streets there, naked as he was, for a good while, when, it being by that time high water, he takes the river again, and swam back to the Still-Yard, landed, ran up the streets to his own house, knocking at the door, went up the stairs, and into his bed again; and that[1] this terrible experiment cured him of the plague, that is to say, that the violent motion of his arms and legs stretched the parts where the swellings he had upon him were, that is to say, under his arms and in his groin, and caused them to ripen and break; and that the cold of the water abated the fever in his blood.

---

[1] Flung to.

[2] Recovered from.

[3] Confusion.

[4] Changed their clothes.

I have only to add, that I do not relate this any more than some of the other,[2] as a fact within my own knowledge, so as that I can vouch the truth of them, and especially that of the man being cured by the extravagant adventure, which I confess I do not think very possible, but it may serve to confirm the many desperate things which the distressed people falling into deliriums, and what we call light-headedness, were frequently run upon[3] at that time, and how infinitely more such there would have been if such people had not been confined by the shutting up of houses; and this I take to be the best, if not the only good thing, which was performed by that severe method.

On the other hand, the complaints and the murmurings were very bitter against the thing itself.

It would pierce the hearts of all that came by to hear the piteous cries of those infected people, who, being thus out of their understandings by the violence of their pain, or

[1] It seems that.
[2] Stories.
[3] Forced into.

the heat of their blood, were either shut in, or perhaps tied in their beds and chairs, to prevent their doing themselves hurt, and who would make a dreadful outcry at their being confined, and at their being not permitted to die at large, as they called it, and as they would have done before.

This running of distempered people about the streets was very dismal, and the magistrates did their utmost to prevent it; but, as it was generally in the night, and always sudden, when such attempts were made, the officers could not be at hand to prevent it; and, even when they got out in the day, the officers appointed did not care to meddle with them, because, as they were all grievously infected, to be sure,[1] when they were come to that height, so they were more than ordinarily infectious, and it was one of the most dangerous things that could be to touch them; on the other hand, they generally ran on, not knowing what they did, till they dropped down stark dead, or till they had exhausted their spirits so as that they would fall and then die in perhaps half an hour or an hour; and which[2] was most piteous to hear, they were sure to come to themselves entirely in that half hour or hour, and then to make most grievous and piercing cries and lamentations, in the deep afflicting sense of the condition they were in. There was much of it before the order for shutting up of houses was strictly put into execution; for, at first, the watchmen were not so rigorous and severe as they were afterwards in the keeping[3] the people in; that is to say, before they were, I mean some of them, severely punished for their neglect, failing[4] in their duty, and letting people who were under their care slip away, or conniving at their going abroad,[5] whether sick or well. But, after they saw the officers appointed to examine into their conduct were resolved to have them do their duty, or be punished for the omission, they were more exact, and the people were strictly restrained; which was a thing they took so ill, and bore so impatiently, that their discontents can hardly be described; but there was an absolute necessity for it, that must be confessed, unless some other measures had been timely entered upon; and it was too late for that.

---

[1] Surely.

[2] What.

[3] The keeping of.

[4] For failing.

[5] Going out.

Had not this particular[1] of the sick being restrained, as above, been our case at that time, London would have been the most dreadful place that ever was in the world; there would, for aught I know, have as many people died in the streets as died in their houses; for, when the distemper was at its height, it generally made them raving and delirious, and when they were so, they would never be persuaded to keep in their beds but by force; and many who were not tied, threw themselves out of windows, when they found they could not get leave to go out of their doors.

It was for want of people conversing one with another in this time of calamity, that it was impossible any particular person could come at the knowledge of all the extraordinary cases that occurred in different families; and, particularly, I believe it was never[2] known to this day how many people in their deliriums drowned themselves in the Thames, and in the river which runs from the marshes by Hackney, which we generally called Ware River, or Hackney River. As to those which were set down in the weekly bill, they were indeed few, nor could it be known of any of those, whether they drowned themselves by accident or not; but I believe I might reckon up more, who, within the compass of my knowledge or observation, really drowned themselves in that year, than are put down in the bill of all put together, for many of the bodies were never found, who yet were known to be lost; and the like in other methods of self-destruction. There was also one man in or about Whitecross Street burnt himself to death in his bed; some said it was done by himself, others, that it was by the treachery of the nurse that attended him, but that he had the plague upon him was agreed by all.

[1] Fact.

[2] Has never been.

It was a merciful disposition of Providence also, and which I have many times thought of at that time, that no fires, or no considerable ones at least, happened in the city during that year, which, if it had been otherwise would have been very dreadful ; and either the people must have let them alone unquenched, or have come together in great crowds and throngs, unconcerned at the danger of the infection, not concerned at the houses they went into, at the goods they handled, or at the persons or the people they came among : but so it was, that, excepting that in Cripplegate parish, and two or three little eruptions of fires, which were presently extinguished, there was no disaster of that kind happened[1] in the whole year. They told us a story of a house in a place called Swan Alley, passing from Goswell Street, near the end of Old Street, into St. John Street, that a family was infected there in so terrible a manner that every one of the house died ; the last person lay dead on the floor, and, as it is supposed, had laid herself all along[2] to die just before the fire ; the fire, it seems, had fallen from its place, being of wood, and had taken hold of the boards and the joists they lay on, and burnt as far as just to the body, but had not taken hold of the dead body, though she had little more than her shift on, and had gone out of itself, not hurting the rest of the house, though it was a slight timber house. How true this might be I do not determine, but the city being to suffer severely the next year, by fire[3] this year it felt very little of that calamity.

Indeed, considering the deliriums which the agony threw people into, and how I have mentioned[4] in their madness when they were alone, they did many desperate things, it was very strange there were no more disasters of that kind.

It has been frequently asked me, and I cannot say that I ever knew how to give a direct answer to it, how it came to pass that so many infected people appeared abroad in the streets, at the same time that the houses which were infected were so vigilantly searched, and all of them shut up and guarded as they were.

---

[1] That happened.

[2] Stretched herself out.

[3] The great fire of 1667.

[4] Mentioned that.

I confess I know not what answer to give to this, unless it be this, that in so great and populous a city as this is, it was impossible to discover every house that was infected as soon as it was so, or to shut up all the houses that were infected ; so that people had the liberty of going about the streets, even where they pleased, unless they were known to belong to such and such infected houses.

It is true, that, as the several physicians told my lord mayor, the fury of the contagion was such at some particular times, and people sickened so fast, and died so soon, that it was impossible, and, indeed, to no purpose, to go about to inquire who was sick and who was well, or to shut them up with such exactness as the thing required ; almost every house in a whole street being infected, and in many places every person in some of the houses ; and that which was still worse, by the time that the houses were known to be infected, most of the persons infected would be stone dead, and the rest run away for fear of being shut up, so that it was to very small purpose to call them infected houses and shut them up ; the infection having ravaged, and taken its leave of the house, before it was really known that the family was any way touched.

This might be sufficient to convince any reasonable person, that as it was not in the power of the magistrates, or of any human methods or policy, to prevent the spreading[1] the infection, so that this way of shutting up of houses was perfectly insufficient for that end. Indeed, it seemed to have no manner of public good in it, equal or proportionable to the grievous burthen that it was to the particular families that were so shut up ; and, as far as I was employed by the public in directing that severity, I frequently found occasion to see that it was incapable of answering the end. For example, as I was desired as a visitor or examiner to

[1] The spreading of.

inquire into the particulars of several families which were infected, we scarce came to any house where the plague had visibly appeared in the family but that some of the family were fled and gone. The magistrates would resent this, and charge the examiners with being remiss in their examination or inspection; but by that means houses were long infected before it was known. Now, as[1] I was in this dangerous office but half the appointed time, which was two months, it was long enough to inform myself that we were no way capable of coming at the knowledge of the true state of any family, but by inquiring at the door, or of the neighbours. As for going into every house to search, that was a part no authority would offer to impose on the inhabitants, or any citizen would undertake, for it would have been exposing us to certain infection and death, and to the ruin of our own families as well as of ourselves; nor would any citizen of probity, and that could be depended upon, have stayed in the town, if they had been made liable to such a severity.

Seeing, then, that we could come at the certainty of things by no method but that of inquiry of the neighbours or of the family, and on that we could not justly depend, it was not possible but that the uncertainty of this matter would remain as above.

It is true masters of families were bound by the order to give notice to the examiner of the place wherein he lived, within two hours after he should discover it, of any person being sick in his house, that is to say, having signs of the infection; but they found so many ways to evade this, and excuse their negligence, that they seldom gave that notice till they had taken measures to have every one escape out of the house who had a mind to escape, whether they were sick or sound; and while this was so, it was easy to see that the shutting up of houses was no way to be depended upon as a sufficient method for putting a stop to the infection, because, as I have said elsewhere, many of those that so went out of those infected houses had the plague really upon them, though they might really think themselves sound; and some of these were the people that walked the streets till they fell down dead, not that they were suddenly struck with the distemper, as with a bullet that killed with the stroke, but that they really had the infection in their blood long before, only that, as it preyed secretly on their vitals, it appeared not till it seized the heart with a mortal power, and the patient died in a moment, as with a sudden fainting, or an apoplectic fit.

---

[1] Although.

I know that some, even of our physicians, thought, for a time, that those people that so died in the streets were seized but that moment[1] they fell, as if they had been touched by a stroke from heaven, as men are killed by a flash of lightning; but they found reason to alter their opinion afterward, for upon examining the bodies of such after they were dead, they always either had tokens upon them, or other evident proofs of the distemper having been longer upon them than they had otherwise expected.

This often was the reason that, as I have said, we that were examiners were not able to come at the knowledge of the infection being entered into a house till it was too late to shut it up, and sometimes not till the people that were left were all dead. In Petticoat Lane two houses together were infected, and several people sick; but, the distemper was so well concealed, the examiner, who was my neighbour, got no knowledge of it till notice was sent him that the people were all dead, and that the carts should call there to fetch them away. The two heads of the families concerted their measures, and so ordered their matters, as that when the examiner was in the neighbourhood, they appeared generally at a time,[2] and answered, that is, lied, for one another, or got some of the neighbourhood to say they were all in health, and perhaps knew no better, till death making it impossible to keep it any longer

[1] Only at the moment.

[2] At the same time.

as a secret, the dead-carts were called in the night to both the houses, and so it became public; but when the examiner ordered the constable to shut up the houses, there was nobody left in them but three people, two in one house, and one in the other, just dying, and a nurse in each house, who acknowledged that they had buried five before, that the houses had been infected nine or ten days, and that for all the rest of the two families, which were many, they were gone, some sick, some well, or whether sick or well, could not be known.

In like manner, at another house in the same lane, a man, having his family infected, but very unwilling to be shut up, when he could conceal it no longer, shut up himself; that is to say, he set the great red cross upon the door, with the words,—"LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US;" and so deluded the examiner, who supposed it had been done by the constable, by order of the other examiner, for there were two examiners to every district or precinct. By this means he had free egress and regress into his house again, and out of it, as he pleased, notwithstanding it was infected, till at length his stratagem was found out, and then he, with the sound part of his family and servants, made off, and escaped; so they were not shut up at all.

These things made it very hard, if not impossible, as I have said, to prevent the spreading of an infection by the shutting up of houses, unless the people would think the shutting up of their houses no grievance, and be so willing to have it done as that they would give notice duly and faithfully to the magistrates of their being infected, as soon as it was known by themselves; but as that cannot be expected from them, and the examiners cannot be supposed, as above, to go into their houses to visit and search, all the good of shutting up houses will be defeated, and few houses will be shut up in time, except those of the poor, who cannot conceal it, and of some people who will be discovered by the terror and consternation which the thing put them into.

I got myself discharged of the dangerous office I was in, as soon as I could get another admitted, whom I had obtained for a little money to accept of it; and so, instead of serving the two months, which was directed, I was not above three weeks in it; and [1] a great while, too, considering it was in the month of August, at which time the distemper began to rage with great violence at our end of the town.

In the execution of this office, I could not refrain speaking my opinion among my neighbours, as to the shutting up the people in their houses; in which we saw most evidently the severities that were used, though grievous in themselves, had also this particular objection against them, namely, that they did not answer the end, as I have said, but that the distempered people went, day by day, about the streets; and it was our united opinion, that a method to have removed the sound from the sick, in case of a particular house being visited, would have been much more reasonable, on many accounts; leaving nobody with the sick persons, but such as should, on such occasions, request to stay, and declare themselves content to be shut up with them.

Our scheme for removing those that were sound from those that were sick, was only in such houses as were infected, and confining the sick was no confinement; those that could not stir would not complain while they were in their senses, and while they had the power of judging. Indeed, when they came to be delirious and light-headed, then they would cry out of [2] the cruelty of being confined; but, for the removal of those that were well, we thought it highly reasonable and just, for their own sakes, they should be removed from the sick, and that, for other people's safety, they should keep retired for awhile, to see that they were sound, and might not infect others; and we thought twenty or thirty days enough for this.

Now, certainly, if houses had been provided on purpose

[1] And it was.

[2] At.

for those that were sound, to perform this demi-quarantine in, they would have much less reason to think themselves injured in such restraint, than in being confined with infected people in the houses where they lived.

It is here, however, to be observed, that, after the funerals became so many that people could not toll the bell, mourn, or weep, or wear black for one another, as they did before; no, nor so much as make coffins for those that died; so, after a while, the fury of the infection appeared to be so increased that, in short, they shut up no houses at all; it seemed enough that all the remedies of that kind had been used till they were found fruitless, and that the plague spread itself with an irresistible fury, so that as the fire the succeeding year spread itself and burnt with such violence that the citizens, in despair, gave over their endeavours to extinguish it, so in the plague, it came at last to such violence that the people sat still looking at one another, and seemed quite abandoned to despair. Whole streets seemed to be desolated, and not to be shut up only, but to be emptied of their inhabitants; doors were left open, windows stood shattering[1] with the wind in empty houses, for want of people to shut them; in a word, people began to give up themselves to their fears, and to think that all regulations and methods were in vain, and that there was nothing to be hoped for but an universal desolation; and it was even in the height of this general despair that it pleased God to stay his hand, and to slacken the fury of the contagion, in such a manner as was even surprising, like its beginning, and demonstrated it to be his own particular hand; and that above, if not without, the agency of means, as I shall take notice of in its proper place.

But I must still speak of the plague, as in its height, raging even to desolation, and the people under the most dreadful consternation, even, as I have said, to despair. It is hardly credible to what excesses the passions of men carried them in this extremity of the distemper; and this part, I think, was as moving as the rest. What could affect a man in his full power of reflection, and what could make deeper impressions on the soul than to see a man, almost naked, and got out of his house, or perhaps out of his bed, into the street, come out of Harrow Alley, a populous conjunction or collection of alleys, courts, and passages, in the Butcher Row in Whitechapel; I say, what could be more affecting, than to see this poor man come out into the open street, run, dancing and singing, and making a thousand antic gestures, with five or six women and children running after him, crying and calling upon him, for the Lord's sake, to come back, and entreating the help of others to bring him back, but all in vain, nobody daring to lay a hand upon him, or to come near him?

---

[1] "Banging" to and fro.

This was a most grievous and afflicting thing to me, who saw it all from my own windows; for all this while the poor afflicted man was, as I observed it, even then in the utmost agony of pain, having, as they said, two swellings upon him, which could not be brought to break or to suppurate; but by laying strong caustics on them, the surgeons had, it seems, hopes to break them, which caustics were then upon him, burning his flesh as with a hot iron. I cannot say what became of this poor man, but I think he continued roving about in that manner till he fell down and died.

No wonder the aspect of the city itself was frightful! The usual concourse of the people in the streets, and[1] which used to be supplied from our end of the town, was abated; the Exchange was not kept shut indeed, but it was no more frequented; the fires were lost; they had been almost extinguished for some days, by a very smart and hasty rain; but that was not all; some of the physicians insisted, that they were not only no benefit, but injurious to the health of the people. This they made a loud clamour about, and complained to the lord mayor about it. On the other hand, others of the same faculty, and eminent too, opposed them, and gave their reasons why the fires were and must be useful, to assuage the violence of the distemper. I cannot give a full account of their arguments on both sides, only this I remember, that they cavilled very much with one another. Some were for fires, but that they must be made of wood, and not coal, and of particular sorts of wood too, such as fir, in particular, or cedar, because of the strong effluvia of turpentine; others were for coal and not wood, because of the sulphur and bitumen; and others were neither for one or other. Upon the whole, the lord mayor ordered no more fires: and especially on this account, namely, that the plague was so fierce, that they saw evidently it defied all means, and rather seemed to increase than decrease, upon any application to check and abate it; and yet this amazement of the magistrates proceeded rather from want of being able to apply any means successfully, than from any unwillingness, either to expose themselves, or undertake the care and weight of business, for, to do them justice, they neither spared their pains nor their persons: but nothing answered, the infection raged, and the people were now terrified to the last degree; so that, as I may say, they gave themselves up, and as I mentioned above, abandoned themselves to their despair.

---

[1] "And" is unnecessary.

But let me observe here, that, when I say the people abandoned themselves to despair, I do not mean to what men call a religious despair, or a despair of their eternal state; but I mean a despair of their being able to escape the infection, or to outlive the plague, which they saw was so raging and so irresistible in its force, that indeed few people that were touched with it in its height, about August and September, escaped; and, which is very particular,[1] contrary to its ordinary operation in June and July, and the beginning of August, when, as I have

[1] Particularly to be noted.

observed, many were infected, and continued so many days, and then went off, after having had the poison in their blood a long time; but now, on the contrary, most of the people who were taken during the last two weeks in August, and in the first three weeks in September, generally died in two or three days at the farthest, and many the very same day they were taken. Whether the dog-days, as our astrologers pretended to express themselves, the influence of the dog-star, had that malignant effect, or all those who had the seeds of infection before in them, brought it up to a maturity at that time altogether, I know not; but this was the time when it was reported that above three thousand people died in one night; and they that would have us believe they more critically observed it, pretend to say, that they all died within the space of two hours; viz., between the hours of one and three in the morning.

As to the suddenness of people dying at this time, more than before, there were innumerable instances of it, and I could name several in my neighbourhood; one family without the bars, and not far from me, were all seemingly well on the Monday, being ten in family; that evening, one maid and one apprentice were taken ill, and died the next morning, when the other apprentice and two children were touched, whereof one died the same evening, and the other two on Wednesday; in a word, by Saturday at noon, the master, mistress, four children, and four servants, were all gone, and the house left entirely empty, except an ancient woman, who came to take charge of the goods for the master of the family's brother, who lived not far off, and who had not been sick.

Many houses were then left desolate, all the people being carried away dead, and especially in an alley farther on the same side beyond the bars, going in at the sign[1] of Moses and Aaron. There were several houses together, which they said had not one person left alive in them; and some that died last in several of those houses were left a little too long before they were fetched out to be buried; the reason of which was not, as some have written, very untruly, that the living were not sufficient to bury the dead, but that the mortality was so great in the yard or alley, that there was nobody left to give notice to the buriers or sextons that there were any dead bodies there to be buried. It was said, how true I know not, that some of those bodies were so corrupted and so rotten, that it was with difficulty they were carried; and, as the carts could not come any nearer than to the alley-gate in the High Street, it was so much the more difficult to bring them along; but I am not certain how many bodies were then left. I am sure that ordinarily it was not so.

---

[1] Of an inn.

As I have mentioned how the people were brought into a condition to despair of life, and abandoned themselves, so this very thing had a strange effect among us for three or four weeks, that is, it made them bold and venturous; they were no more shy of one another, or restrained within doors, but went anywhere and everywhere, and began to converse; one would say to another—"I do not ask you how you are, or say how I am; it is certain we shall all go, so 'tis no matter who is sick or who is sound;" and so they ran desperately into any place or company.

As it brought the people into public company, so it was surprising how it brought them to crowd into the churches; they inquired no more into who[1] they sat near to, or far from, what offensive smells they met with, or what condition the people seemed to be in, but looking upon themselves all as so many dead corpses, they came to the churches without the least caution, and crowded together as if their lives were of no consequence compared to the work which they came about there; indeed, the zeal which they showed in coming, and the earnestness and affection they showed in their attention to what they heard, made it manifest what a value people would all put upon the worship of God

[1] Whom.

if they thought every day they attended at the church that it would be their last. Nor was it without other strange effects, for it took away all manner of prejudice at, or scruple about, the person whom they found in the pulpit when they came to the churches. It cannot be doubted but that many of the ministers of the parish churches were cut off among others in so common and dreadful a calamity; and others had not courage enough to stand it, but removed into the country as they found means for escape; as, then, some parish churches were quite vacant and forsaken, the people made no scruple of desiring such dissenters as had been a few years before[1] deprived of their livings, [2] by virtue of an act of parliament called the Act of Uniformity,[3] to preach in the churches, nor did the church ministers in that case make any difficulty in accepting their assistance; so that many of those whom they called silent ministers, had their mouths opened on this occasion, and preached publicly to the people.

Here we may observe, and I hope it will not be amiss to take notice of it, that a near view of death would soon reconcile men of good principles one to another, and that it is chiefly owing to our easy situation in life, and our putting these things far from us, that our breaches are fomented, ill blood continued, prejudices, breach of charity and of christian union so much kept and so far carried on among us as it is: another plague year would reconcile all these differences, a close conversing with death, or with diseases that threaten death, would scum off the gall from our tempers, remove the animosities among us, and bring us to see with differing eyes than those[4] which we looked on things with before; as the people who had been used to join with the church were reconciled at this time with the admitting the dissenters to preach to them, so the dissenters, who, with an uncommon prejudice, had broken off from the communion of the Church of England, were now content to come to their parish churches, and to conform to the worship which they did not approve of before; but as the terror of the infection abated, those things all returned again to their less desirable channel, and to the course they were in before.

---

[1] In 1661.

[2] Their positions.

[3] The act restricted the functions of the clergy to such as took the sacrament in the authorized Church of England.

[4] Eyes differing from those.

I mention this but historically; I have no mind to enter into arguments to move either or both sides to a more charitable compliance one with another; I do not see that it is probable such a discourse would be either suitable or successful; the breaches seem rather to widen, and tend to a widening farther than to closing; and who am I, that I should think myself able to influence either one side or other? But this I may repeat again, that it is evident death will reconcile us all—on the other side the grave we shall be all brethren again; in heaven, whither I hope we may come from all parties and persuasions, we shall find neither prejudice nor scruple; there we shall be of one principle and of one opinion. Why we cannot be content to go hand in hand to the place where we shall join heart and hand without the least hesitation and with the most complete harmony and affection; I say, why we cannot do so here I can say nothing to, neither shall I say anything more of it, but that it remains to be lamented.

I could dwell a great while upon the calamities of this dreadful time, and go on to describe the objects that appeared among us every day, the dreadful extravagances which the distraction of sick people drove them into; how the streets began now to be fuller of frightful objects, and families to be made even a terror to themselves; but, after I have told you, as I have above, that one man being tied in his bed, and finding no other way to deliver himself, set the bed on fire with his candle, which unhappily stood within his reach, and burnt himself in bed; and how another, by the insufferable torment he bore, danced and sung naked in the streets, not knowing one ecstasy[1] from another; I say, after I have mentioned these things, what can be added more? What can be said to represent the misery of these times more lively to the reader, or to give him a perfect idea of a more complicated distress?

I must acknowledge that this time was so terrible that I was sometimes at the end of all my resolutions, and that I had not the courage that I had at the beginning. As the extremity brought other people abroad, it drove me home, and, except having made my voyage down to Blackwall and Greenwich, as I have related, which was an excursion, I kept afterwards very much within doors, as I had for about a fortnight before. I have said already, that I repented several times that I had ventured to stay in town, and had not gone away with my brother and his family, but it was too late for that now; and after I had retreated and stayed within doors a good while before my impatience led me abroad, then they called me, as I have said, to an ugly and dangerous office, which brought me out again; but as that was expired while the height of the distemper lasted, I retired again, and continued close ten or twelve days more, during which many dismal spectacles represented themselves in my view, out of my own windows, and in our own street, as that particularly from Harrow Alley, of the poor outrageous creature who danced and sung in his agony; and many others there were. Scarce a day or a night passed over but some dismal thing or other happened at the end of that Harrow Alley, which was a place full of poor people, most of them belonging to the butchers, or to employments depending upon the butchery.

Sometimes heaps and throngs of people would burst out of the alley, most of them women, making a dreadful clamour, mixed or compounded of screeches, cryings, and calling one another, that we could not conceive what to make of it; almost all the dead part of the night the dead-cart stood at the end of that alley, for if it went in, it could not well turn again and could go in but a little way. There, I say, it stood to receive dead bodies; and, as the churchyard was but a little way off, if it went away full it would soon be back again. It is impossible to describe the most horrible cries and noise the poor people would make at their bringing the dead bodies of their children and friends out to the cart; and, by the number, one would have thought there had been none left behind, or that there were people enough for a small city living in those places. Several times they cried "murder," sometimes "fire;" but it was easy to perceive that it was all distraction, and the complaints of distressed and distempered people.

---

[1] An ecstasy of pain from an ecstasy of joy.

I believe it was everywhere thus at that time, for the plague raged for six or seven weeks beyond all that I have expressed, and came even to such a height, that, in the extremity, they began to break into that excellent order, of which I have spoken so much in behalf of the magistrates, namely, that no dead bodies were seen in the streets, or burials in the daytime; for there was a necessity in this extremity, to bear with its being otherwise for a little while.

One thing I cannot omit here, and, indeed, I thought it was extraordinary, at least it seemed a remarkable hand of divine justice; viz., that all the predictors, astrologers, fortune-tellers, and what they called cunning men, conjurors, and the like, calculators of nativities, and dreamers of dreams, and such people, were gone and vanished, not one of them was to be found. I am verily persuaded that a great number of them fell in the heat of the calamity, having ventured to stay upon the prospect of getting great estates; and, indeed, their gain was but too great for a time, through the madness and folly of the people; but now they were silent; many of them went to their long home, not able to foretell their own fate, or to calculate their own nativities. Some have been critical[1] enough to say that every one of them died. I dare not affirm that; but this I must own, that I never heard of one of them that ever appeared after the calamity was over.

---

[1] In the rare sense of "bold."

But to return to my particular observations during this dreadful part of the visitation. I am now come, as I have said, to the month of September, which was the most dreadful of its kind, I believe, that ever London saw; for, by all the accounts which I have seen of the preceding visitations which have been in London, nothing has been like it; the number in the weekly bill amounting to almost forty thousands from the 22nd of August to the 26th of September, being but five weeks. The particulars of the bills are as follows; viz.:

From August the 22nd to the 29th	7,496
To the 5th of September	8,252
To the 12th	7,690
To the 19th	8,297
To the 26th	6,460
	38,195

This was a prodigious number of itself; but if I should add the reasons which I have to believe that this account was deficient, and how deficient it was, you would with me make no scruple to believe that there died above ten thousand a week for all those weeks, one week with another, and a proportion[1] for several weeks, both before and after. The confusion among the people, especially within the city, at that time, was inexpressible; the terror was so great at last that the courage of the people appointed to carry away the dead began to fail them; nay, several of them died, although they had the distemper before, and were recovered; and some of them dropped down when they have been carrying the bodies even at the pitside, and just ready to throw them in; and this confusion was greater in the city, because they had flattered themselves with hopes of escaping, and thought the bitterness of death was past. One cart they told us, going up Shoreditch, was forsaken by the drivers, or being left to one man to drive, he died in the street, and the horses going on, overthrew the cart, and left the bodies, some thrown here, some there, in a dismal manner. Another cart was, it seems, found in the great pit in Finsbury Fields, the driver being dead, or having been gone and abandoned it, and the horses running too near it, the cart fell in and drew the horses in also. It was suggested that the driver was thrown in with it, and that the cart fell upon him, by reason[1] his whip was seen to be in the pit among the bodies ; but that, I suppose, could not be certain.

---

[1] A good proportion of that number.

In our parish of Aldgate the dead-carts were several times, as I have heard, found standing at the churchyard gate, full of dead bodies ; but neither bellman, or driver, or any one else with it. Neither in these, or many other cases, did they know what bodies they had in their cart, for sometimes they were let down with ropes out of balconies and out of windows ; and sometimes the bearers brought them to the cart, sometimes other people ; nor, as the men themselves said, did they trouble themselves to keep any account of the numbers.

The vigilance of the magistrate was now put to the utmost trial ; and, it must be confessed, can never be enough acknowledged on this occasion ; also, whatever expense or trouble they were at, two things were never neglected in the city or suburbs either :—

1. Provisions were always to be had in full plenty and the price not much raised neither, hardly worth speaking.

2. No dead bodies lay unburied or uncovered ; and if anyone walked from one end of the city to another, no funeral, or sign of it, was to be seen in the daytime ; except a little, as I have said, in the first three weeks in September.

---

[1] By reason that : because.

This last article, perhaps, will hardly be believed, when some accounts which others have published since that shall be seen; wherein they say, that the dead lay unburied, which I am sure was utterly false; at least, if it had been anywhere so, it must have been in houses where the living were gone from the dead, having found means, as I have observed, to escape, and where no notice was given to the officers. All which amounts to nothing at all in the case in hand; for this I am positive in, having myself been employed a little in the direction of that part of the parish in which I lived, and where as great a desolation was made, in proportion to the number of the inhabitants, as was anywhere. I say, I am sure that there were no dead bodies remained unburied; that is to say, none that the proper officers knew of, none for want of people to carry them off, and buriers to put them into the ground and cover them; and this is sufficient to the argument; for what might lie in houses and holes, as in Moses and Aaron Alley, is nothing, for it is most certain they were buried as soon as they were found. As to the first article, namely, of provisions, the scarcity or dearness, though I have mentioned it before, and shall speak of it again, yet I must observe here,

(1.) The price of bread in particular was not much raised; for in the beginning of the year, viz., in the 1st week in March, the penny wheaten loaf was ten ounces and a half; and in the height of the contagion it was to be had at nine ounces and a half, and never dearer, no, not all that season. And about the beginning of November, it was sold at ten ounces and a half again, the like of which, I believe, was never heard of in any city, under so dreadful a visitation, before.

(2.) Neither was there, which I wondered much at, any want of bakers, or ovens kept open to supply the people with bread: but this was, indeed, alleged by some families, viz., that their maid-servants going to the bakehouses with their dough to be baked, which was then the custom, sometimes came home with the sickness, that is to say, the plague upon them.

In all this dreadful visitation, there were, as I have said before, but two pest-houses made use of, viz., one in the fields beyond Old Street, and one in Westminster ; neither was there any compulsion used in carrying people thither. Indeed, there was no need of compulsion in the case, for there were thousands of poor distressed people, who, having no help, or conveniences, or supplies, but of charity, would have been very glad to have been carried thither, and been taken care of, which, indeed, was the only thing that, I think, was wanting in the whole public management of the city ; seeing nobody was here allowed to be brought to the pest-house, but where money was given, or security for money, either at their introducing,[1] or upon their being cured and sent out ; for very many were sent out again whole, and very good physicians were appointed to those places, so that many people did very well there, of which I shall make mention again. The principal sort of people sent thither were, as I have said, servants, who got the distemper by going of errands to fetch necessaries for the families where they lived ; and who, in that case, if they came home sick, were removed, to preserve the rest of the house ; and they were so well looked after there, in all the time of the visitation, that there was but 156 buried in all at the London pest-house, and 159 at that of Westminster.

By having more pest-houses, I am far from meaning a forcing all people into such places. Had the shutting up of houses been omitted, and the sick hurried out of their dwellings to pest-houses, as some proposed, it seems, at that time as well as since, it would certainly have been much worse than it was ; the very removing of the sick would have been a spreading of the infection, and the rather because that removing could not effectually clear the house where the sick person was of the distemper; and the rest of the family, being then left at liberty, would certainly spread it among others.

---

[1] The patients' being introduced.

The methods also in private families, which would have been universally used to have concealed the distemper, and to have concealed the persons being sick, would have been such that the distemper would sometimes have seized a whole family before any visitors or examiners could have known of it. On the other hand, the prodigious numbers which would have been sick at a time would have exceeded all the capacity of public pest-houses to receive them, or of public officers to discover and remove them.

This was well considered in those days, and I have heard them talk of it often. The magistrates had enough to do to bring people to submit to having their houses shut up, and many ways they deceived the watchmen and got out, as I observed; but that difficulty made it apparent that they would have found it impracticable to have gone the other way to work; for they could never have forced the sick people out of their beds, and out of their dwellings: it must not have been my lord mayor's officers, but an army of officers, that must have attempted it; and the people, on the other hand, would have been enraged and desperate, and would have killed those that should have offered to have meddled with them, or with their children and relations, whatever had befallen them for it; so that they would have made the people, who, as it was, were in the most terrible distraction imaginable—I say, they would have made them stark mad! whereas the magistrates found it proper on several occasions to treat them with lenity and compassion, and not with violence and terror, such as dragging the sick out of their houses, or obliging them to remove themselves, would have been.

This leads me again to mention the time when the plague first began, that is to say, when it became certain that it would spread over the whole town, when, as I have said, the better sort of people first took the alarm, and began to hurry themselves out of town; it was true, as I observed in its place, that the throng was so great, and the coaches, horses, waggons, and carts were so many, driving and dragging the people away, that it looked as if all the city was running away, and had any regulations been published that had been terrifying at that time, especially such as would pretend to dispose of the people otherwise than they would dispose of themselves, it would have put both the city and suburbs into the utmost confusion.

The magistrates wisely caused the people to be encouraged, made very good by-laws [1] for the regulating the citizens, keeping good order in the streets, and making everything as eligible as possible to all sorts of people.

In the first place, the lord mayor and the sheriffs, the court of aldermen, and a certain number of the common-councilmen, or their deputies, came to a resolution, and published it, viz., that they would not quit the city themselves, but that they would be always at hand for the preserving good order in every place, and for doing justice on all occasions; as also for the distributing the public charity to the poor; and, in a word, for the doing the duty and discharging the trust reposed in them by the citizens, to the utmost of their power.

In pursuance of these orders, the lord mayor, sheriffs, etc., held councils every day, more or less, for making such dispositions as they found needful for preserving the civil peace; and though they used the people with all possible gentleness and clemency, yet all manner of presumptuous rogues, such as thieves, housebreakers, plunderers of the dead or of the sick, were duly punished, and several declarations were continually published by the lord mayor and court of aldermen against such.

Also, all constables and churchwardens were enjoined to stay in the city upon severe penalties, or to depute such able and sufficient housekeepers as the deputy-aldermen, or common-councilmen of the precinct should approve, and for whom they should give security; and also security in case of mortality,[1] that they would forthwith constitute other constables in their stead.

---

[1] Here, local or municipal laws.

These things re-established the minds of the people very much; especially in the first of their fright, when they talked of making so universal a flight that the city would have been in danger of being entirely deserted of its inhabitants, except the poor, and the country of being plundered and laid waste by the multitude. Nor were the magistrates deficient in performing their part as boldly as they promised it; for my lord mayor and the sheriffs were continually in the streets, and at places of the greatest danger; and though they did not care for having too great a resort of people crowding about them, yet, in emergent cases, they never denied the people access to them, and heard with patience all their grievances and complaints; my lord mayor had a low gallery, built on purpose in his hall, where he stood, a little removed from the crowd, when any complaint came to be heard, that he might appear with as much safety as possible.

Likewise, the proper officers, called my lord mayor's officers, constantly attended in their turns, as they were in waiting; and if any of them were sick or infected, as some of them were, others were instantly employed to fill up and officiate in their places, till it was known whether the other should live or die.

In like manner, the sheriffs and aldermen did, in their several stations and wards, where they were placed by office, and the sheriff's officers or serjeants were appointed to receive orders from the respective aldermen in their turn; so that justice was executed in all cases without interruption. In the next place, it was one of their particular cares to see the orders for the freedom of the markets observed; and in this part, either the lord mayor, or one or both of the sheriffs, were every market-day on horseback to see their orders executed, and to see that the country people had all possible encouragement and freedom in their coming to the markets, and going back again ; and that no nuisance or frightful object should be seen in the streets to terrify them, or make them unwilling to come. Also, the bakers were taken under particular order, and the master of the Bakers' Company was, with his court of assistants, directed to see the order of my lord mayor for their regulation put in execution, and the due assize[1] of bread, which was weekly appointed by my lord mayor, observed ; and all the bakers were obliged to keep their ovens going constantly, on pain of losing the privileges of a freeman[2] of the city of London.

---

[1] Death.

By this means, bread was always to be had in plenty, and as cheap as usual, as I said above ; and provisions were never wanting in the markets, even to such a degree that I often wondered at it, and reproached myself with being so timorous and cautious in stirring abroad, when the country people came freely and boldly to market, as if there had been no manner of infection in the city, or danger of catching it.

It was, indeed, one admirable piece of conduct in the said magistrates, that the streets were kept constantly clear and free from all manner of frightful objects, dead bodies, or any such things as were indecent or unpleasant ; unless where anybody fell down suddenly, or died in the streets, as I have said above, and these were generally covered with some cloth or blanket, or removed into the next churchyard till night. All the needful works that carried terror with them, that were both dismal and dangerous, were done in the night ; if any diseased bodies were removed or dead bodies buried, or infected clothes burnt, it was done in the night ; and all the bodies which were thrown into the great pits in the several churchyards or burying-grounds, as has been observed, were so removed in the night; and everything was covered and closed before day. So that in the daytime there was not the least signal of the calamity to be seen or heard of, except what was to be observed from the emptiness of the streets, and sometimes from the passionate outcries and lamentations of the people, out at their windows, and from the numbers of houses and shops shut up.

---

[1] Ordinance in regard to weight, price, etc.

[2] Members of the various guilds or trade-companies voted for certain public officers and had other similar privileges.

Nor was the silence and emptiness of the streets so much in the city as in the out-parts; except just at one particular time, when, as I have mentioned, the plague came east, and spread over all the city. It was, indeed, a merciful disposition of God that, as the plague began at one end of the town first, as has been observed at large,[1] so it proceeded progressively to other parts, and did not come on this way, or eastward, till it had spent its fury in the west part of the town; and so as it came on one way, it abated another; for example:—

It began at St. Giles's and the Westminster end of the town, and it was in its height in all that part by about the middle of July, viz., in St. Giles's in the Fields, St. Andrew's, Holborn, St. Clement's Danes, St. Martin's in the Fields, and in Westminster: the latter end of July it decreased in those parishes, and coming east, it increased prodigiously in Cripplegate, St. Sepulchre's, St. James's, Clerkenwell, and St. Bride's and Aldersgate. While it was in all these parishes, the city and all the parishes of the Southwark side of the water, and all Stepney, Whitechapel, Aldgate, Wapping, and Ratcliff, were very little touched; so that people went about their business unconcerned, carried on their trades, kept open their shops, and conversed freely with one another in all the city, the east and north-east suburbs, and in Southwark, almost as if the plague had not been among us.

Even when the north and north-west suburbs were fully

[1] At length.

infected, viz., Cripplegate, Clerkenwell, Bishopsgate, and Shoreditch, yet still all the rest were tolerably well: for example:—

From the 25th July to the 1st of August, the bill stood thus of all diseases:—

St. Giles's, Cripplegate	554
St. Sepulchre's	250
Clerkenwell	103
Bishopsgate	116
Shoreditch	110
Stepney Parish	127
Aldgate	92
Whitechapel	104
All the 97 parishes within the walls	228
All the parishes in Southwark	205
	1889

So that, in short, there died more that week in the two parishes of Cripplegate and St. Sepulchre's by 48, than all[1] the city, all the east suburbs, and all the Southwark parishes put together: this caused the reputation of the city's health to continue all over England, and especially in the counties and markets adjacent, from whence our supply of provisions chiefly came, even much longer than that health itself continued; for when the people came into the streets from the country by Shoreditch and Bishopsgate, or by Old Street and Smithfield, they would see the out-streets empty, and the houses and shops shut, and the few people that were stirring there walk in the middle of the streets; but when they came within the city, there things looked better, and the markets and shops were open, and the people walking about the streets as usual, though not quite so many; and this continued till the latter end of August and the beginning of September.

[1] In all.

But then the case altered quite, the distemper abated in the west and north-west parishes, and the weight of the infection lay on the city and the eastern suburbs, and the Southwark side, and this in a frightful manner.

Then indeed the city began to look dismal, shops to be shut, and the streets desolate; in the High Street, indeed, necessity made people stir abroad on many occasions; and there would be in the middle of the day a pretty many[1] people, but in the mornings and evenings scarce any to be seen even there, no, not in Cornhill and Cheapside.

These observations of mine were abundantly confirmed by the weekly bills of mortality for those weeks, an abstract of which, as they respect the parishes which I have mentioned, and as they make the calculations I speak of very evident, take[2] as follows:—

The weekly bill which makes out this decrease of the burials in the west and north side of the city, stands thus:—

St. Giles's, Cripplegate	456
St. Giles's in the Fields	140
Clerkenwell	77
St. Sepulchre's	214
St. Leonard, Shoreditch	183
Stepney Parish	716
Aldgate	623
Whitechapel	532
In the 97 parishes within the walls	1493
In the 8 parishes on Southwark side	1636
	6070

Here is a strange change of things, indeed, and a sad change it was, and had it held for two months more than it did, very few people would have been left alive; but then such, I say, was the merciful disposition of God, that when it was thus, the west and north part, which had been so dreadfully visited at first, grew, as you see, much better; and as the people disappeared here, they began to look abroad again there; and the next week or two altered it still more, that is, more to the encouragement of the other part of the town; for example:—

---

[1] A good many.

[2] That is, you (the reader), take (find).

From the 19th of September to the 26th.

St. Giles's, Cripplegate	277
St. Giles's in the Fields	119
Clerkenwell	76
St. Sepulchre's	193
St. Leonard, Shoreditch	146
Stepney Parish	616
Aldgate	496
Whitechapel	346
In the 97 parishes within the walls	1268
In the 8 parishes on Southwark side	1390
	4927

From the 26th of September to the 3d of October:—

St. Giles's, Cripplegate	196
St. Giles's in the Fields	95
Clerkenwell	48
St. Sepulchre's	137
St. Leonard, Shoreditch	128
Stepney Parish	674
Aldgate	372
Whitechapel	328
In the 97 parishes within the wall	1149
In the 8 parishes on Southwark side	1201
	4328

And now the misery of the city, and of the said east and south parts, was complete indeed; for, as you see, the weight of the distemper lay upon those parts, that is to say, the city, the eight parishes over the river, with the parishes of Aldgate, Whitechapel, and Stepney, and this was the time that the bills came up to such a monstrous height as that I mentioned before; and that eight or nine, and, as I believe, ten or twelve thousand a week, died; for it is my settled opinion, that they[1] never could come at any just account of the numbers, for the reasons which I have given already.

Nay, one of the most eminent physicians, who has since published in Latin an account of those times, and of his observations, says, that in one week there died twelve thousand people, and that particularly there died four thousand in one night: though I do not remember that there ever was any such particular night so remarkably fatal as that such a number died in it: however, all this confirms what I have said above of the uncertainty of the bills of mortality, etc., of which I shall say more hereafter.

And here let me take leave to enter again, though it may seem a repetition of circumstances, into a description of the miserable condition of the city itself, and of those parts where I lived, at this particular time. The city and those other parts, notwithstanding the great numbers of people that were gone into the country, was[2] vastly full of people; and perhaps the fuller, because people had, for a long time, a strong belief that the plague would not come into the city, nor into Southwark, no, nor into Wapping or Ratcliff at all; nay, such was the assurance of the people on that head, that many removed from the suburbs on the west and north sides, into those eastern and south sides as for safety, and, as I verily believe, carried the plague amongst them there, perhaps sooner than they would otherwise have had it.

[1] The authorities.

[2] Were.

Here, also, I ought to leave a further remark for the use of posterity, concerning the manner of people's infecting one another; namely, that it was not the sick people only from whom the plague was immediately received by others that were sound, but the well. To explain myself; by the sick people, I mean those who were known to be sick, had taken their beds, had been under cure, or had swellings or tumours upon them, and the like; these everybody could beware of; they were either in their beds, or in such condition as could not be concealed.

By the well, I mean such as had received the contagion, and had it really upon them and in their blood, yet did not show the consequences of it in their countenances; nay, even were not sensible of it themselves, as many were not for several days. These breathed death in every place, and upon everybody who came near them; nay, their very clothes retained the infection, their hands would infect the things they touched, especially if they were warm and sweaty, and they were generally apt to sweat too.

Now, it was impossible to know these people, nor did they sometimes, as I have said, know themselves to be infected. These were the people that so often dropped down and fainted in the streets; for oftentimes they would go about the streets to the last, till on a sudden they would sweat, grow faint, sit down at a door, and die. It is true, finding themselves thus, they would struggle hard to get home to their own doors, or, at other times, would be just able to go into their houses, and die instantly; other times they would go about till they had the very tokens come out upon them, and yet not know it, and would die in an hour or two after they came home, but be well as long as they were abroad. These were the dangerous people, these were the people of whom the well people ought to have been afraid; but then, on the other side, it was impossible to know them.

And this is the reason why it is impossible in a visitation to prevent the spreading of the plague by the utmost human vigilance, viz., that it is impossible to know the infected people from the sound, or that the infected people should perfectly know themselves. I knew a man who conversed[1] freely in London all the season of the plague in 1665, and kept about him an antidote or cordial, on purpose to take when he thought himself in any danger, and he had such a rule to know, or have warning of the danger by, as indeed I never met with before or since; how far it may be depended on I know not. He had a wound in his leg, and whenever he came among any people that were not sound, and the infection began to affect him, he said he could know it by that signal, viz., that the wound in his leg would smart, and look pale and white; so as soon as ever he felt it smart it was time for him to withdraw, or to take care of himself, taking his drink, which he always carried about him for that purpose. Now it seems he found his wound would smart many times when he was in company with such who thought themselves to be sound, and who appeared so to one another; but he would presently rise up, and say publicly,—"Friends, here is somebody in the room that has the plague;" and so would immediately break up the company. This was, indeed, a faithful monitor to all people, that the plague is not to be avoided by those that converse promiscuously in a town infected, and people have it when they know it not, and that they likewise give it to others when they know not that they have it themselves; and in this case shutting up the well or removing the sick will not do it, unless they can go back and shut up all those that the sick had conversed with, even before they knew themselves to be sick, and none knows how far to carry that back, or where to stop; for none knows when, or where, or how they may have received the infection, or from whom.

This I take to be the reason which makes so many people talk of the air being corrupted and infected, and that they need not be cautious of whom they converse with, for that the contagion was in the air. I have seen them in strange agitations and surprises on this account. "I have never come near any infected body!" says the disturbed person, "I have conversed with none but sound healthy people, and yet I have gotten the distemper!"—"I am sure I am struck from heaven," says another, and he falls to the serious part.[1] Again, the first goes on exclaiming, "I have come near no infection, or any infected person; I am sure it is in the air; we draw in death when we breathe, and therefore it is the hand of God: there is no withstanding it." And this at last made many people, being hardened to the danger, grow less concerned at it, and less cautious towards the latter end of the time, and when it was come to its height, than they were at first; then, with a kind of a Turkish predestinarianism they would say, if it pleased God to strike them it was all one whether they went abroad or stayed at home, they could not escape it, and therefore they went boldly about, even into infected houses and infected company, visited sick people, and, in short, lay in the beds with their wives or relations when they were infected; and what was the consequence but the same that is the consequence in Turkey, and in those countries where they do those things? namely, that they were infected too, and died by hundreds and thousands.

---

[1] Held intercourse.

I would be far from lessening the awe of the judgments of God, and the reverence to his providence, which ought always to be on our minds on such occasions as these; doubtless the visitation itself is a stroke from heaven upon a city, or country, or nation where it falls, a messenger of his vengeance, and a loud call to that nation, or country, or city, to humiliation and repentance, according to that of the prophet Jeremiah xviii. 7, 8: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and pull down, and destroy it: if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Now to prompt due impressions of the awe of God on the minds of men on such occasions, and not to lessen them, it is that[1] I have left those minutes upon record.

---

[1] Turns to pious thoughts

I say, therefore, I reflect upon no man for putting the reason of those things upon the immediate hand of God, and the appointment and direction of his providence; nay, on the contrary, there were many wonderful deliverances of persons from infection, and deliverances of persons when infected, which intimate singular and remarkable providence in the particular instances to which they refer; and I esteem my own deliverance to be one next to miraculous, and to record it with thankfulness.

But when I am speaking of the plague as a distemper arising from natural causes, we must consider it as it was really propagated by natural means, nor is it at all the less a judgment for its being under the conduct of human causes and effects; for as the divine power has formed the whole scheme of nature, and maintains nature in its course, so the same power thinks fit to let[2] his own actings with men, whether of mercy or judgment, to go on in the ordinary course of natural causes, and he is pleased to act by those natural causes as the ordinary means; excepting and reserving to himself nevertheless a power to act in a supernatural way when he sees occasion. Now it is evident that, in the case of an infection, there is no apparent extraordinary occasion for supernatural operation, but the ordinary course of things appears sufficiently armed, and made capable of all the effects that heaven usually directs by a contagion. Among these causes and effects this of the secret conveyance of infection, imperceptible and unavoidable, is more than sufficient to execute the fierceness of divine vengeance, without putting it upon supernaturals[3] and miracles.

---

[1] It is to prompt . . . that I have left.

[2] Allow.

[3] Supernatural things.

The acute, penetrating nature of the disease itself was such, and the infection was received so imperceptibly, that the most exact caution could not secure us while in the place; but I must be allowed to believe, and I have so many examples fresh in my memory, to convince me of it, that I think none can resist their evidence; I say, I must be allowed to believe, that no one in this whole nation ever received the sickness or infection but who received it in the ordinary way of infection from somebody, or the clothes, or touch, or stench of somebody that was infected before.

The manner of its first coming to London proves this also, viz., by goods brought over from Holland, and brought thither from the Levant; the first breaking of it out in a house in Longacre, where those goods were carried and first opened; its spreading from that house to other houses by the visible unwary conversing with those who were sick, and the infecting the parish officers who were employed about persons dead, and the like. These[1] are known authorities for this great foundation point, that it went on and proceeded from person to person, and from house to house, and no otherwise. In the first house that was infected there died four persons; a neighbour, hearing the mistress of the first house was sick, went to visit her, and went home and gave the distemper to her family, and died, and all her household. A minister called to pray with the first sick person in the second house, was said to sicken immediately, and die, with several more in his house. Then the physicians began to consider, for they did not at first dream of a general contagion; but the physicians being sent to inspect the bodies, they assured the people that it was neither more or less than the plague, with all its terrifying particulars, and that it threatened an universal infection, so many people having already conversed with the sick or distempered, and having, as might be supposed, received infection from them, that it would be impossible to put a stop to it.

---

[1] These facts.

Here the opinion of the physicians agreed with my observation afterwards, namely, that the danger was spreading insensibly; for the sick could infect none but those that came within reach of the sick person, but that one man, who may have really received the infection, and knows it not, but goes abroad and about as a sound person, may give the plague to a thousand people, and they to greater numbers in proportion, and neither the person giving the infection, nor the persons receiving it, know anything of it, and perhaps not feel the effects of it for several days after. For example:—

Many persons, in the time of this visitation, never perceived that they were infected, till they found, to their unspeakable surprise, the tokens come out upon them, after which they seldom lived six hours; for those spots they called the tokens were really gangrene spots, or mortified flesh, in small knobs as broad as a little silver penny, and hard as a piece of callus or horn; so that when the disease was come up to that length, there was nothing could follow but certain death; and yet, as I said, they knew nothing of their being infected, nor found themselves so much as out of order, till those mortal marks were upon them. But everybody must allow that they were infected in a high degree before, and must have been so some time; and, consequently, their breath, their sweat, their very clothes were contagious for many days before.

This occasioned a vast variety of cases, which physicians would have much more opportunity to remember than I; but some came within the compass of my observation or hearing, of which I shall name a few.

A certain citizen, who had lived safe and untouched till the month of September, when the weight of the distemper lay more in the city than it had done before, was mighty cheerful, and something too bold, as I think it was, in his talk of how secure he was, how cautious he had been, and how he had never come near any sick body. Says another citizen, a neighbour of his, to him, one day, "Do not be too confident, Mr. ——; it is hard to say who is sick and who is well; for we see men alive and well to outward appearance one hour, and dead the next." "That is true," says the first man (for he was not a man presumptuously secure, but had escaped a long while; and men, as I have said above, especially in the city, began to be over-easy on that score). "That is true," says he, "I do not think myself secure, but I hope I have not been in company with any person that there has been any danger in." "No!" says his neighbour; "was[1] not you at the Bull Head tavern in Gracechurch Street, with Mr. ——, the night before last?" "Yes," says the first, "I was, but there was nobody there that we had any reason to think dangerous." Upon which his neighbour said no more, being unwilling to surprise him; but this made him more inquisitive, and, as his neighbour appeared backward, he was the more impatient; and in a kind of warmth, says he aloud, "Why, he is not dead, is he?" Upon which his neighbour still was silent, but cast up his eyes, and said something to himself; at which the first citizen turned pale, and said no more but this, "Then I am a dead man too!" and went home immediately, and sent for a neighbouring apothecary to give him something preventive, for he had not yet found himself ill; but the apothecary opening his breast, fetched a sigh, and said no more but this, "Look up to God;" and the man died in a few hours.

Now let any man judge, from a case like this, if it is possible for the regulations of magistrates, either by shutting up the sick or removing them, to stop an infection which spreads itself from man to man even while they are perfectly well and insensible of its approach, and may be so for many days.

It may be proper to ask here how long it may be supposed men might have the seeds of the contagion in them before it discovered itself in this fatal manner, and how long they might go about seemingly whole, and yet be contagious to all those that came near them. I believe the most experienced physicians cannot answer this question directly any more than I can; and something an ordinary observer may take notice of, which may pass their observation. The opinion of physicians abroad seems to be, that it may lie dormant in the spirits, or in the blood-vessels, a very considerable time; why else do they exact a quarantine of those who come into their harbours and ports from suspected places? Forty days is, one would think, too long for nature to struggle with such an enemy as this and not conquer it or yield to it; but I could not think by my own observation that they can be infected, so as to be contagious to others, above fifteen or sixteen days at farthest; and on that score it was, that when a house was shut up in the city, and any one had died of the plague, but nobody appeared to be ill in the family for sixteen or eighteen days after, they were not so strict but that they would connive at their going privately abroad; nor would people be much afraid of them afterwards, but rather think they were fortified the better, having not been vulnerable when the enemy was in their house; but we sometimes found it had lain much longer concealed.

---

[1] Were.

Upon the foot of all these observations I must say, that, though Providence seemed to direct my conduct to be otherwise, it is my opinion, and I must leave it as a prescription, viz., that the best physic against the plague is to run away from it. I know people encourage themselves by saying, God is able to keep us in the midst of danger, and able to overtake us when we think ourselves out of danger; and this kept thousands in the town, whose carcasses went into the great pits by cartloads; and who, if they had fled from the danger, had, I believe, been safe from the disaster; at least, 'tis probable they had been safe.

And were this very fundamental only duly considered by the people on any future occasion of this or the like nature, I am persuaded it would put them upon quite different measures for managing the people from those that they took in 1665, or than any that have been taken abroad, that I have heard of ; in a word, they would consider of separating the people into smaller bodies, and removing them in time farther from one another, and not let such a contagion as this, which is indeed chiefly dangerous to collected bodies of people, find a million of people in a body together, as was very near the case before, and would certainly be the case if it should ever appear again.

The plague, like a great fire, if a few houses only are contiguous where it happens, can only burn a few[1] houses ; or if it begins in a single, or, as we call it, a lone house, can only burn that lone house where it begins. But if it begins in a close-built town or city, and gets ahead, there its fury increases, it rages over the whole place, and consumes all it can reach.

I could propose many schemes on the foot of which the government of this city, if ever they should be under the apprehension of such another enemy (God forbid they should), might ease themselves of the greatest part of the dangerous people that belong to them ; I mean such as the begging, starving, labouring poor, and among them chiefly those who, in a case of siege, are called the useless mouths ; who, being then prudently, and to their own advantage, disposed of, and the wealthy inhabitants disposing of themselves, and of their servants and children, the city, and its adjacent parts would be so effectually evacuated that there would not be above a tenth part of its people left together, for the disease to take hold upon : but suppose them to be a fifth part, and that two hundred and fifty thousand people were left, and if it did seize upon them, they would by their living so much at large be much better prepared to defend themselves against the infection, and be less liable to the effects of it than if the same number of people lived close together in one smaller city, such as Dublin, or Amsterdam, or the like.

---

[1] Can burn only a few.

It is true, hundreds, yea, thousands of families fled away at this last plague; but then of them many fled too late, and not only died in their flight, but carried the distemper with them into the countries where they went, and infected those whom they went among for safety; which confounded the thing, and made that be a propagation of the distemper which was the best means to prevent it; and this, too, is evident[1] of it, and brings me back to what I only hinted at before, but must speak more fully to[2] here; namely, that men went about apparently well, many days after they had the taint of the disease in their vitals, and after their spirits were so seized as that they could never escape it; and that all the while they did so they were dangerous to others; I say, this proves that so it was; for such people infected the very towns they went through, as well as the families they went among. And it was by that means that almost all the great towns in England had the distemper among them, more or less; and always they would tell you such a Londoner or such a Londoner brought it down.

It must not be omitted, that when I speak of those people who were really thus dangerous, I suppose them to be utterly ignorant of their own condition; for if they really knew their circumstances to be such as indeed they were, they must have been a kind of wilful murderers, if they would have gone abroad among healthy people, and it would have verified indeed the suggestion which I mentioned above, and which I thought seemed untrue, viz., that the infected people were utterly careless as to giving the infection to others, and rather forward to do it than not; and I believe it was partly from this very thing that they raised that suggestion, which I hope was not really true in fact.

I confess no particular case is sufficient to prove a general,[3] but I could name several people within the knowledge

[1] Evidence.

[2] In regard to.

[3] A general proposition.

of some of their neighbours and families yet living, who showed the contrary to an extreme. One man, the master of a family in my neighbourhood, having had the distemper, he thought he had it given him by a poor workman whom he employed, and whom he went to his house to see, or went for some work that he wanted to have finished ; and he had some apprehensions even while he was at the poor workman's door, but did not discover it[1] fully, but the next day it discovered itself, and he was taken very ill ; upon which he immediately caused himself to be carried into an outbuilding which he had in his yard, and where there was a chamber over a workhouse, the man being a brazier. Here he lay, and here he died ; and would be tended by none of his neighbours, but by a nurse from abroad ; and would not suffer his wife, nor children, nor servants, to come up into the room, lest they should be infected, but sent them his blessing and prayers for them by the nurse, who spoke it to them at a distance ; and all this for fear of giving them the distemper, and without which he knew, as they were kept up, they could not have it.[2]

And here I must observe also that the plague, as I suppose all distempers do, operated in a different manner on differing constitutions. Some were immediately overwhelmed with it, and it came to violent fevers, vomitings, insufferable headaches, pains in the back, and so up to ravings and ragings with those pains : others with swellings and tumours in the neck or groin, or armpits, which, till they could be broke, put them into insufferable agonies and torment ; while others, as I have observed, were silently infected, the fever preying upon their spirits insensibly, and they seeing little of it till they fell into swooning, and faintings, and death without pain.

---

[1] Did not discover that he had the plague.

[2] That is, as I understand it, "and he knew that, as they were kept out of his chamber, they could not have the plague without personal contact."

I am not physician enough to enter into the particular reasons and manner of these differing effects of one and the same distemper, and of its differing operation in several bodies; nor is it my business here to record the observations which I really made, because the doctors themselves have done that part much more effectually than I can do, and because my opinion may, in some things, differ from theirs. I am only relating what I know, or have heard, or believe, of the particular cases, and what fell within the compass of my view, and the different nature of the infection as it appeared in the particular cases which I have related; but this may be added, too, that though the former sort of those cases, namely, those openly visited, were the worst for themselves as to pain, I mean those that had such fevers, vomitings, headaches, pains, and swellings, because they died in such a dreadful manner: yet the latter had the worst state of the disease, for in the former they frequently recovered, especially if the swellings broke; but the latter was inevitable death, no cure, no help could be possible, nothing could follow but death; and it was worse also to others, because, as above, it secretly and unperceived by others or by themselves, communicated death to those they conversed with, the penetrating poison insinuating itself into their blood in a manner which it was impossible to describe, or indeed conceive.

This infecting and being infected, without so much as its being known to either person, is evident from two sorts of cases, which frequently happened at that time; and there is hardly anybody living, who was in London during the infection, but must have known several of the cases of both sorts.

1. Fathers and mothers have gone about as if they had been well, and have believed themselves to be so, till they have insensibly infected and been the destruction of their whole families; which they would have been far from doing, if they had had the least apprehensions of their being unsound and dangerous themselves. A family, whose

story I have heard, was thus infected by the father, and the distemper began to appear upon some of them even before he found it upon himself; but searching more narrowly, it appeared he had been infected some time, and as soon as he found that his family had been poisoned by himself, he went distracted, and would have laid violent hands upon himself, but was kept from that by those who looked to him, and in a few days he died.

2. The other particular is, that many people having been well to the best of their own judgment, or by the best observation which they could make of themselves for several days, and only finding a decay of appetite, or a light sickness upon their stomachs; nay, some whose appetite has been strong, and even craving, and only a light pain in their heads, have sent for physicians to know what ailed them, and have been found, to their great surprise, at the brink of death, the tokens upon them, or the plague grown up to an incurable height.

It was very sad to reflect, how such a person as this last mentioned above, had been a walking destroyer, perhaps for a week or fortnight before that; how he had ruined those that he would have hazarded his life to save; and had been breathing death upon them, even perhaps in his tender kissing and embracings of his own children. Yet thus certainly it was, and often has been, and I could give many particular cases where it has been so. If, then, the blow is thus insensibly striking; if the arrow flies thus unseen and cannot be discovered; to what purpose are all the schemes for shutting up or removing the sick people? Those schemes cannot take place but upon those that appear to be sick, or to be infected; whereas there are among them, at the same time, thousands of people who seem to be well, but are all that while carrying death with them into all companies which they come into.

This frequently puzzled our physicians, and especially the apothecaries and surgeons, who knew not how to discover the sick from the sound. They all allowed that it was really so; that many people had the plague in their very blood, and preying upon their spirits, and were in themselves but walking putrified carcasses, whose breath was infectious, and their sweat poison, and yet were as well to look on as other people, and even knew it not themselves; I say, they all allowed that it was really true in fact, but they knew not how to propose a discovery.[1]

My friend Dr. Heath was of opinion, that it might be known by the smell of their breath; but then, as he said, who durst smell to that breath for his information, since, to know it, he must draw the stench of the plague up into his own brain, in order to distinguish the smell? I have heard, it was the opinion of others, that it might be distinguished by the party's breathing upon a piece of glass, where, the breath condensing, there might living creatures be seen by a microscope, of strange, monstrous, and frightful shapes, such as dragons, snakes, serpents, and devils, horrible to behold. But this I very much question the truth of; and we had no microscopes at that time, as I remember, to make the experiment with.

It was the opinion also of another learned man, that the breath of such a person would poison and instantly kill a bird; not only a small bird, but even a cock or hen; and that if it did not immediately kill the latter, it would cause them to be roupy,[2] as they call it; particularly that if they had laid any eggs at that time, they would be all rotten. But those are opinions which I never found supported by any experiments, or heard of others that had seen it, so I leave them as I find them, only with this remark, namely, that I think the probabilities are very strong for them.

Some have proposed that such persons should breathe hard upon warm water, and that they would leave an unusual scum upon it, or upon several other things; especially such as are of a glutinous substance, and are apt to receive a scum and support it.

[1] A test.

[2] Catarrhal.

But, from the whole,[1] I found that the nature of this contagion was such that it was impossible to discover it at all, or to prevent it spreading from one to another by any human skill.

Here was, indeed, one difficulty, which I could never thoroughly get over to this time, and which there is but one way of answering that I know of, and it is this, viz.: the first person that died of the plague was on December 20th, or thereabouts, 1664, and in or about Longacre; whence the first person had [2] the infection was generally said to be [3] from a parcel of silks imported from Holland, and first opened in that house.

But after this we heard no more of any person dying of the plague, or of the distemper being in that place, till the 9th of February, which was about seven weeks after, and then one more was buried out of the same house: then it was hushed, and we were perfectly easy as to the public for a great while; for there were no more entered in the weekly bill to be dead of the plague till the 22nd of April, when there were two more buried, not out of the same house, but out of the same street; and, as near as I can remember, it was out of the next house to the first: this was nine weeks asunder, and after this we had no more till a fortnight, and then it broke out in several streets, and spread every way. Now the question seems to lie thus:— Where lay the seeds of the infection all this while? how came it to stop so long, and not stop any longer? Either the distemper did not come immediately by contagion from body to body, or if it did, then a body may be capable to continue infected, without the disease discovering itself, many days, nay, weeks together, even not a quarantine of days only, but a soixantine, not only forty days, but sixty days, or longer.

It is true, there was, as I observed at first, and is well known to many yet living, a very cold winter, and a long frost, which continued three months, and this, the doctors say, might check the infection; but then the learned must allow me to say, that if, according to their notion, the disease was, as I may say, only frozen up, it would, like a frozen river, have returned to its usual force and current when it thawed, whereas the principal recess [1] of this infection, which was from February to April, was after the frost was broken, and the weather mild and warm.

---

[1] From all the facts. [2] Who had. [3] To have taken it.

But there is another way of solving all this difficulty, which I think my own remembrance of the thing will supply; and that is, the fact is not granted, namely, that there died none in those long intervals, viz., from the 20th of December to the 9th of February, and from thence to the 22nd of April. The weekly bills are the only evidence on the other side, and those bills were not of credit enough, at least with me, to support an hypothesis, or determine a question of such importance as this: for it was our received opinion at that time, and I believe upon very good grounds, that the fraud lay in the parish officers, searchers, and persons appointed to give account of the dead, and what diseases they died of; and as people were very loath at first to have the neighbours believe their houses were infected, so they gave money to procure, or otherwise procured, the dead persons to be returned as dying of other distempers; and this I know was practised afterwards in many places, I believe I might say in all places where the distemper came, as will be seen by the vast increase of the numbers placed in the weekly bills under other articles of diseases during the time of the infection; for example, in the months of July and August, when the plague was coming on to its highest pitch, it was very ordinary to have from a thousand to twelve hundred, nay, to almost fifteen hundred a week, of other distempers; not that the numbers of those distempers were really increased to such a degree; but the great number of families and houses where really the infection was, obtained the favour to have their dead be returned of other distempers, to prevent the shutting up their houses. For example :—

---

[1] The period when it receded.

Dead of other diseases besides the Plague.

From the 18th to the 25th July	942
To the 1st of August	1004
To the 8th	1213
To the 15th	1439
To the 22nd	1331
To the 29th	1394
To the 5th of September	1264
To the 12th	1056
To the 19th	1132
To the 26th	927

Now it was not doubted but the greatest part of these, or a great part of them, were dead of the plague, but the officers were prevailed with to return them as above, and the numbers of some particular articles of distempers discovered is as follows :—

From the 1st to 8th Aug., to 15th, to 22nd, to 29th.

Fever	314	353	348	383
Spotted Fever	174	190	166	165
Surfeit	85	87	74	99
Teeth	90	113	111	133
	663	743	699	780

From Aug. 29 to Sept. 5th, to 12th, to 19th, to 26th.

Fever	364	332	309	268
Spotted Fever	157	97	101	65
Surfeit	68	45	49	36
Teeth	138	128	121	112
	727	602	580	481

There were several others articles which bore a proportion to these, and which it is easy to perceive were increased on the same account, as aged,[1] consumptions, vomitings, imposthumes,[2] gripes, and the like, many of which were not doubted to be infected people; but as it was of the utmost consequence to families not to be known to be infected, if it was possible to avoid it, so they took all the measures they could to have it not believed; and if any died in their houses to get them returned to the examiners, and by the searchers, as having died of other distempers.

This, I say, will account for the long interval which, as I have said, was between the dying of the first persons that were returned in the bills to be dead of the plague, and the time when the distemper spread openly, and could not be concealed.

Besides, the weekly bills themselves, at that time, evidently discovers this truth; for, while there was no mention of the plague, and no increase after it had been mentioned, yet it was apparent that there was an increase of those distempers which bordered nearest upon it; for example, there were eight, twelve, seventeen of the spotted fever in a week when there were none or but very few of the plague; whereas, before, one, three, or four, were the ordinary weekly numbers of that distemper. Likewise, as I observed before, the burials increased weekly in that particular parish, and the parishes adjacent, more than in any other parish, although there were none set down of the plague; all which tell us that the infection was handed on, and the succession of the distemper really preserved, though it seemed to us at that time to be ceased, and to come again in a manner surprising.

It might be also that the infection might remain in other parts of the same parcel of goods which at first it came in, and which might not be perhaps opened, or at least not fully, or in the clothes of the first infected person; for I cannot think that anybody could be seized with the conta-

[1] Persons dying of old age.

[2] Abscesses.

gion in a fatal and mortal degree for nine weeks together, and support his state of health so well, as even not to discover it to themselves ;[1] yet, if it were so, the argument is the stronger in favour of what I am saying, namely, that the infection is retained in bodies apparently well, and conveyed from them to those they converse with, while it is known to neither the one nor the other.

Great were the confusions at that time upon this very account ; and when people began to be convinced that the infection was received in this surprising manner from persons apparently well, they began to be exceeding shy and jealous of every one that came near them. Once, on a public day, whether a Sabbath-day or not, I do not remember, in Aldgate church, in a pew full of people, on a sudden one fancied she smelt an ill smell ; immediately she fancies the plague was in the pew, whispers her notion or suspicion to the next, then rises and goes out of the pew ; it immediately took with the next, and so with them all, and every one of them and of the two or three adjoining pews, got up and went out of the church, nobody knowing what it was offended them, or from whom.

This immediately filled everybody's mouths with one preparation or other, such as the old women directed, and some perhaps as physicians directed, in order to prevent infection by the breath of others ; insomuch, that if we came to go into a church, when it was anything full of people, there would be such a mixture of smells at the entrance, that it was much more strong, though perhaps not so wholesome, than if you were going into an apothecary's or druggist's shop. In a word, the whole church was like a smelling bottle ; in one corner it was all perfumes, in another aromatics, balsamics, and a variety of drugs and herbs ; in another, salts and spirits, as every one was furnished for their own preservation : yet I observed, that, after people were possessed, as I have said, with the belief, or rather assurance, of the infection being thus carried on by persons apparently in health, the churches and meeting-houses were much thinner of people than at other times, before that they used to be; for this is to be said of the people of London, that, during the whole time of the pestilence, the churches or meetings were never wholly shut up, nor did the people decline coming out to the public worship of God, except only in some parishes, when the violence of the distemper was more particularly in that parish at that time; and even then no longer than it continued to be so.

---

[1] Himself.

Indeed, nothing was more strange than to see with what courage the people went to the public service of God, even at that time when they were afraid to stir out of their own houses upon any other occasion: this I mean before the time of desperation which I have mentioned already. This was a proof of the exceeding populousness of the city at the time of the infection, notwithstanding the great numbers that were gone into the country at the first alarm, and that fled out into the forests and woods when they were further terrified with the extraordinary increase of it. For when we came to see the crowds and throngs of people which appeared on the Sabbath-days at the churches, and especially in those parts of the town where the plague was abated, or where it was not yet come to its height, it was amazing. But of this I shall speak again presently. I return, in the meantime, to the article of infecting one another at first. Before people came to right notions of the infection, and of infecting one another, people were only shy of those that were really sick; a man with a cap upon his head, or with clothes round his neck, which was the case of those that had swellings there, such was indeed frightful; but when we saw a gentleman dressed, with his band[1] on, and his gloves in his hand, his hat upon his head, and his hair combed, of such we had not the least apprehensions, and people conversed a great while freely, especially with their neighbours and such as they knew.

---

[1] A form of collar.

But when the physicians assured us that the danger was as well from the sound, that is, the seemingly sound, as the sick, and that those people that thought themselves entirely free were oftentimes the most fatal; and that it came to be generally understood that people were sensible of it, and of the reason of it; then, I say, they began to be jealous of everybody, and a vast number of people locked themselves up, so as not to come abroad into any company at all, nor suffer any that had been abroad in promiscuous company to come into their houses or near them; at least not so near them as to be within the reach of their breath, or of any smell from them; and when they were obliged to converse at a distance with strangers, they would always have preservatives in their mouths, and about their clothes, to repel and keep off the infection.

It must be acknowledged, that when people began to use these cautions, they were less exposed to danger, and the infection did not break into such houses so furiously as it did into others before, and thousands of families were preserved, speaking with due reserve to the direction of divine Providence, by that means.

But it was impossible to beat anything into the heads of the poor. They went on with the usual impetuosity of their tempers, full of outcries, and lamentations when taken, but madly careless of themselves, foolhardy and obstinate, while they were well. Where they could get employment they pushed into any kind of business, the most dangerous and the most liable to infection; and, if they were spoken to, their answer would be, "I must trust to God for that; if I am taken, then I am provided for, and there is an end of me;" and the like. Or thus, "Why, what must I do? I cannot starve, I had as good have the plague as perish for want; I have no work; what could I do? I must do this or beg." Suppose it was burying the dead, or attending the sick, or watching infected houses, which were all terrible hazards; but their tale was generally the same. It is true, necessity was a justifiable, warrantable plea, and nothing could be better; but their way of talk was much the same where the necessities were not the same. This adventurous conduct of the poor was that which brought the plague among them in a most furious manner; and this, joined to the distress of their circumstances, when taken, was the reason why they died so by heaps; for I cannot say I could observe one jot of better husbandry among them, I mean the labouring poor, while they were all well and getting money, than there was before, but as lavish, as extravagant, and as thoughtless for to-morrow as ever; so that when they came to be taken sick, they were immediately in the utmost distress, as well for want as for sickness, as well for lack of food as lack of health.

The misery of the poor I had many occasions to be an eye-witness of, and sometimes also of the charitable assistance that some pious people daily gave to such, sending them relief and supplies both of food, physic, and other help, as they found they wanted; and, indeed, it is a debt of justice due to the temper of the people of that day, to take notice here, that not only great sums, very great sums of money, were charitably sent to the lord mayor and aldermen for the assistance and support of the poor distempered people, but abundance of private people daily distributed large sums of money for their relief, and sent people about to inquire into the condition of particular distressed and visited families, and relieved them; nay, some pious ladies were transported with zeal in so good a work, and so confident in the protection of Providence in discharge of the great duty of charity, that they went about in person distributing alms to the poor, and even visiting poor families, though sick and infected, in their very houses, appointing nurses to attend those that wanted attending, and ordering apothecaries and surgeons, the first to supply them with drugs or plasters, and such things as they wanted, and the last to lance and dress the swellings and tumours, where such were wanting; giving their blessing to the poor in substantial relief to them, as well as hearty prayers for them.

I will not undertake to say, as some do, that none of those charitable people were suffered to fall under the calamity itself; but this I may say, that I never knew any one of them that miscarried,[1] which I mention for the encouragement of others in case of the like distress; and doubtless, if they that give to the poor, lend to the Lord, and he will repay them,[2] those that hazard their lives to give to the poor, and to comfort and assist the poor in such misery as this, may hope to be protected in the work.

Nor was this charity so extraordinary eminent only in a few; but (for I cannot lightly quit this point) the charity of the rich, as well in the city and suburbs as from the country, was so great, that, in a word, a prodigious number of people, who must otherwise have perished for want as well as sickness, were supported and subsisted by it; and though I could never, nor I believe any one else, come to a full knowledge of what was so contributed, yet I do believe that, as I heard one say that was a critical observer of that part,[3] there was not only many thousand pounds contributed, but many hundred thousand pounds, to the relief of the poor of this distressed, afflicted city; nay, one man affirmed to me that he could reckon up above one hundred thousand pounds a week, which was distributed by the churchwardens at the several parish vestries, by the lord mayor and the aldermen in the several wards and precincts, and by the particular direction of the court and of the justices respectively in the parts where they resided; over and above the private charity distributed by pious hands in the manner I speak of; and this continued for many weeks together.

I confess this is a very great sum; but if it be true that there was distributed in the parish of Cripplegate only, seventeen thousand eight hundred pounds in one week to the relief of the poor, as I heard reported, and which I really believe was true, the other may not be improbable.

---

[1] Came to grief.

[2] *Proverbs* xix. 17.

[3] *I.e.*, of the circumstances, unless "part" be here used in the rare sense of "conduct."

It was doubtless to be reckoned among the many signal good providences which attended this great city, and of which there were many other worth recording; I say this was a very remarkable one, that it pleased God thus to move the hearts of the people in all parts of the kingdom so cheerfully to contribute to the relief and support of the poor at London; the good consequences of which were felt many ways, and particularly in preserving the lives and recovering the health of so many thousands, and keeping so many thousands of families from perishing and starving.

And now I am talking of the merciful disposition of Providence in this time of calamity, I cannot but mention again, though I have spoken several times of it already on other accounts, I mean that of the progression of the distemper; how it began at one end of the town, and proceeded gradually and slowly from one part to another, and like a dark cloud that passes over our heads, which, as it thickens and overcasts the air at one end, clears up at the other end; so, while the plague went on raging from west to east, as it went forwards east it abated in the west, by which means those parts of the town which were not seized, or who were left, and where it had spent its fury, were (as it were) spared to help and assist the other; whereas, had the distemper spread itself over the whole city and suburbs at once, raging in all places alike, as it has done since in some places abroad, the whole body of the people must have been overwhelmed, and there would have died twenty thousand a day, as they say there did at Naples, nor would the people have been able to have helped or assisted one another.

For it must be observed, that where the plague was in its full force, there, indeed, the people were very miserable, and the consternation was inexpressible. But a little before it reached even to that place, or presently after it was gone, they were quite another sort of people, and I cannot but acknowledge that there was too much of that common temper of mankind to be found among us all at that time, namely, to forget the deliverance when the danger is past; but I shall come to speak of that part again.

It must not be forgot here to take some notice of the state of trade during the time of this common calamity; and this with respect to foreign trade, as also to our home trade.

As to foreign trade, there needs little to be said. The trading nations of Europe were all afraid of us; no port of France, or Holland, or Spain, or Italy, would admit our ships or correspond with us; indeed, we stood on ill terms with the Dutch, and were in a furious war with them, though in a bad condition to fight abroad, who had such dreadful enemies to struggle with at home.

Our merchants were accordingly at a full stop; their ships could go nowhere, that is to say, to no place abroad; their manufactures and merchandise, that is to say, of our growth, would not be touched abroad; they were as much afraid of our goods as they were of our people; and, indeed, they had reason, for our woollen manufactures are as retentive of infection as human bodies, and, if packed up by persons infected, would receive the infection and be as dangerous to the touch as a man would be that was infected; and, therefore, when any English vessel arrived in foreign countries, if they did take the goods on shore, they always caused the bales to be opened and aired in places appointed for that purpose. But from London they would not suffer them to come into port, much less to unload their goods upon any terms whatever; and this strictness was especially used with them in Spain and Italy: in Turkey, and the islands of the Arches,[1] indeed, as they are called, as well those belonging to the Turks as to the Venetians, they were not so very rigid; in the first there was no obstruction at all, and for [1] ships which were then in the river loading for Italy, that is, for Leghorn and Naples, being denied [2] product,[3] as they call it, went on to Turkey, and were freely admitted to unlade their cargo without any difficulty, only that when they arrived there some of their cargo was not fit for sale in that country, and other parts of it being consigned to merchants at Leghorn, the captains of the ships had no right nor any orders to dispose of the goods, so that great inconveniences followed to the merchants. But this was nothing but what the necessity of affairs required, and the merchants at Leghorn and Naples having notice given them, sent again from thence to take care of the effects, which were particularly consigned to those ports, and to bring back in other ships such as were improper for the markets at Smyrna and Scanderoon.[4]

---

[1] The Grecian Archipelago.

The inconveniences in Spain and Portugal were still greater; for they would by no means suffer our ships, especially those from London, to come into any of their ports, much less to unlade. There was a report, that one of our ships, having by stealth delivered her cargo, among which were some bales of English cloth, cotton, kerseys,[5] and such like goods, the Spaniards caused all the goods to be burnt, and punished the men with death who were concerned in carrying them on shore. This I believe was in part true, though I do not affirm it; but it is not at all unlikely, seeing the danger was really very great, the infection being so violent in London.

I heard likewise that the plague was carried into those countries by some of our ships, and particularly to the port of Faro, in the kingdom of Algarve,[6] belonging to the King of Portugal; and that several persons died of it there, but it was not confirmed.

---

[1] Omit "for."

[2] At Leghorn and Naples.

[3] Permission to unload their cargoes.

[4] Iskanderun or Alexandretta, a seaport of Asiatic Turkey.

[5] Coarse woollen clothes.

[6] The most southern province of Portugal.

On the other hand, though the Spaniards and Portuguese were so shy of us, it is most certain that the plague, as has been said, keeping at first much at that end of the town next Westminster, the merchandising part of the town, such as the city, and the waterside, was perfectly sound, till at least the beginning of July; and the ships in the river till the beginning of August; for, to the 1st of July, there had died but seven within the whole city, and but 60 within the liberties; but one in all the parishes of Stepney, Aldgate, and Whitechapel, and but two in all the eight parishes of Southwark; but it was the same thing abroad, for the bad news was gone over the whole world that the city of London was infected with the plague; and there was no inquiring there how the infection proceeded, or at which part of the town it was begun or was reached to.

Besides, after it began to spread, it increased so fast, and the bills grew so high all on a sudden, that it was to no purpose to lessen the report of it, or endeavour to make the people abroad think it better than it was; the account which the weekly bills gave in was sufficient; and that there died two thousand to three or four thousand a week, was sufficient to alarm the whole trading part of the world, and the following time being so dreadful also in the very city itself, put the whole world, I say, upon their guard against it.

You may be sure also that the report of these things lost nothing in the carriage; the plague was itself very terrible, and the distress of the people very great, as you may observe of[1] what I have said; but the rumour was infinitely greater, and it must not be wondered that our friends abroad, as my brother's correspondents in particular were told there, namely, in Portugal and Italy, where he chiefly traded, that in London there died twenty thousand in a week; that the dead bodies lay unburied by heaps; that the living

[1] By.

were not sufficient to bury the dead, or the sound to look after the sick; that all the kingdom was infected likewise, so that it was an universal malady, such as was never heard of in those parts of the world; and they could hardly believe us when we gave them an account how things really were, and how there was not above one-tenth part of the people dead; that there were five hundred thousand left that lived all the time in the town; that now the people began to walk the streets again, and those who were fled to return; there was no miss of the usual throng of people in the streets, except as every family might miss their relations and neighbours, and the like; I say, they could not believe these things; and if inquiry were now to be made in Naples, or in other cities on the coast of Italy, they would tell you there was a dreadful infection in London so many years ago, in which, as above, there died twenty thousand in a week, etc., just as we have had it reported in London that there was a plague in the city of Naples in the year 1656, in which there died twenty thousand people in a day, of which I have had very good satisfaction that it was utterly false.

But these extravagant reports were very prejudicial to our trade, as well as unjust and injurious in themselves, for it was a long time after the plague was quite over before our trade could recover itself in those parts of the world; and the Flemings and Dutch, but especially the last, made very great advantages of it, having all the market to themselves, and even buying our manufactures in the several parts of England where the plague was not, and carrying them to Holland and Flanders, and from thence transporting them to Spain and to Italy, as if they had been of their own making.

But they were detected sometimes and punished, that is to say, their goods confiscated and ships also: for if it was true that our manufactures, as well as our people, were infected, and that it was dangerous to touch, or to open and receive the smell of them, then those people ran the hazard, by that clandestine trade, not only of carrying the contagion into their own country, but also of infecting the nations to whom they traded with those goods; which, considering how many lives might be lost in consequence of such an action, must be a trade that no men of conscience could suffer themselves to be concerned in.

I do not take upon me to say that any harm was done, I mean of that kind, by those people; but I doubt[1] I need not make any such proviso in the case of our own country; for either by our people of London, or by the commerce, which made their conversing with all sorts of people in every county, and of every considerable town, necessary; I say, by this means the plague was first or last spread all over the kingdom, as well in London as in all the cities and great towns, especially in the trading manufacturing towns and seaports; so that, first or last, all the considerable places in England were visited more or less, and the kingdom of Ireland in some places, but not so universally. How it fared with the people in Scotland I had no opportunity to inquire.

It is to be observed, that while the plague continued so violent in London, the outports, as they are called, enjoyed a very great trade, especially to the adjacent countries, and to our own plantations;[2] for example, the towns of Colchester, Yarmouth, and Hull, on that side of England, exported to Holland and Hamburg the manufactures of the adjacent counties for several months after the trade with London was, as it were, entirely shut up; likewise the cities of Bristol, and Exeter, with the port of Plymouth, had the like advantage to Spain, to the Canaries, to Guinea, and to the West Indies, and particularly to Ireland; but as the plague spread itself every way after it had been in London to such a degree as it was in August and September, so all or most of those cities and towns were infected first or last, and then trade was, as it were, under a general embargo, or at a full stop, as I shall observe farther when I speak of our home trade.

---

[1] Suppose.

[2] Colonies.

One thing, however, must be observed, that as to ships coming in from abroad, as many you may be sure did, some who were out in all parts of the world a considerable while before, and some who, when they went out, knew nothing of an infection, or, at least, of one so terrible; these came up the river boldly, and delivered their cargoes as they were obliged to do, except just in the two months of August and September, when the weight of the infection lying, as I may say, all below bridge,[1] nobody durst appear in business for a while; but, as this continued but for a few weeks, the homeward bound ships, especially such whose cargoes were not liable to spoil, came to an anchor for a time short of the Pool, or fresh water part of the river, even as low as the river Medway, where several of them ran in, and others lay at the Nore, and in the Hope below Gravesend; so that by the latter end of October there was a very great fleet of homeward bound ships to come up, such as the like had not been known for many years.

Two particular trades were carried on by water-carriage all the while of the infection, and that with little or no interruption, very much to the advantage and comfort of the poor distressed people of the city, and those were the coasting trade for corn, and the Newcastle trade for coals.

The first of these was particularly carried on by small vessels from the port of Hull, and other places in the Humber, by which great quantities of corn were brought in from Yorkshire and Lincolnshire; the other part of this corn trade was from Lynn in Norfolk, from Wells, and Burnham, and from Yarmouth all in the same county; and the third branch was from the river Medway, and from Milton, Feversham, Margate, and Sandwich, and all the other little places and ports round the coast of Kent and Essex.

There was also a very good trade from the coast of Suffolk, with corn, butter, and cheese. These vessels kept a constant course of trade, and without interruption came up to that market known still by the name of Bear Key, where they supplied the city plentifully with corn, when land-carriage began to fail, and when the people began to be sick of coming from many places in the country.

---

[1] London Bridge.

This also was much of it owing to the prudence and conduct of the lord mayor, who took such care to keep the masters and seamen from danger when they came up, causing their corn to be bought off at any time they wanted a market (which, however, was very seldom), and causing the corn-factors[1] immediately to unlade and deliver the vessels laden with corn, that[2] they had very little occasion to come out of their ships or vessels, the money being always carried on board to them, and put it into a pail of vinegar before it was carried.

The second trade was that of coals from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, without which the city would have been greatly distressed; for, not in the streets only, but in private houses and families, great quantities of coal were then burnt, even all the summer long, and when the weather was hottest, which was done by the advice of the physicians. Some, indeed, opposed it, and insisted that to keep the houses and rooms hot was a means to propagate the distemper, which was a fermentation and heat already in the blood; that it was known to spread and increase in hot weather, and abate in cold, and therefore they alleged that all contagious distempers are the worst for heat, because the contagion was nourished and gained strength in hot weather, and was, as it were, propagated in heat.

Others said, they granted that heat in the climate might propagate infection, as sultry hot weather fills the air with vermin, and nourishes innumerable numbers and kinds of venomous creatures, which breed in our food, in the plants, and even in our bodies, by the very stench of which infection may be propagated; also, that heat in the air, or heat of weather, as we ordinarily call it, makes bodies relax and faint, exhausts the spirits, opens the pores, and makes us

[1] Wholesale merchants.

[2] So that.

more apt to receive infection or any evil influence, be it from noxious, pestilential vapours, or any other thing in the air; but that the heat of fire, and especially of coal fires, kept in our houses or near us, had quite a different operation, the heat being not of the same kind, but quick and fierce, tending not to nourish but to consume and dissipate all those noxious fumes which the other kind of heat rather exhaled and stagnated than separated and burnt up; besides, it was alleged that the sulphurous and nitrous particles that are often found to be in the coal, with that bituminous substance which burns, are all assisting to clear and purge the air, and render it wholesome and safe to breathe in, after the noxious particles (as above) are dispersed and burnt up.

The latter opinion prevailed at that time, and, as I must confess, I think, with good reason, and the experience of the citizens confirmed it, many houses which had constant fires kept in the rooms having never been infected at all; and I must join my experience to it, for I found the keeping of good fires kept our rooms sweet and wholesome, and I do verily believe made our whole family so, more than would otherwise have been.

But I return to the coals as a trade. It was with no little difficulty that this trade was kept open, and particularly because as we were in an open war with the Dutch at that time, the Dutch capers[1] at first took a great many of our collier ships, which made the rest cautious, and made them to stay to[2] come in fleets together; but after some time the capers were either afraid to take them, or their masters, the States,[3] were afraid they should, and forbade them, lest the plague should be among them, which made them fare the better.

For the security of those northern traders, the coal ships were ordered by my lord mayor not to come up into the Pool above a certain number at a time, and ordered lighters and other vessels, such as the woodmongers,[1] that is, the wharf-keepers, or coal-sellers furnished, to go down and take out the coals as low as Deptford and Greenwich, and some farther down.

---

[1] Light Dutch privateers.

[2] Wait in order to.

[3] The States-General, the Dutch legislative assembly.

Others delivered great quantities of coals in particular places, where the ships could come to the shore, as at Greenwich, Blackwall, and other places, in vast heaps, as if to be kept for sale, but were then fetched away after the ships which brought them were gone; so that the seamen had no communication with the river men, nor so much as came near one another.

Yet all this caution could not effectually prevent the distemper getting among the colliery, that is to say, among the ships, by which a great many seamen died of it; and that which was still worse was, that they carried it down to Ipswich and Yarmouth, to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and other places on the coast; where, especially at Newcastle and at Sunderland, it carried off a great number of people.

The making so many fires, as above, did, indeed, consume an unusual quantity of coals;[2] and that[3] upon one or two stops of the ships coming up, whether by contrary weather or by the interruption of enemies, I do not remember, but the price of coals was exceedingly dear, even as high as 4*l.* a chaldron,[4] but it soon abated when the ships came in, and as afterwards they had a freer passage, the price was very reasonable all the rest of that year.

The public fires which were made on these occasions, as I have calculated it, must necessarily have cost the city about 200 chaldron of coals a week, if they had continued, which was indeed a very great quantity, but as it was thought necessary, nothing was spared; however, as some of the physicians cried them down, they were not kept alight above four or five days. The fires were ordered thus:

---

[1] Wood merchants.

[2] In England the word "coal" is frequently used in the plural.

[3] And brought it about that.

[4] Then twenty-five and a half hundredweight.

One at the Custom House; one at Billingsgate; one at Queenhithe; and one at the Three Cranes; one in Blackfriars; and one at the gate of Bridewell; one at the corner of Leadenhall Street and Gracechurch; one at the north, and one at the south gate of the Royal Exchange; one at Guildhall, and one at Blackwell Hall gate; one at the lord mayor's door in St. Helen's; one at the west entrance into St. Paul's; and one at the entrance into Bow church. I do not remember whether there was any at the city gates, but one at the bridge foot there was, just by St. Magnus Church.

I know some have quarrelled since that at the experiment, and said that there died the more people because of those fires; but I am persuaded those that say so offer no evidence to prove it, neither can I believe it on any account whatever.

It remains to give some account of the state of trade at home in England, during this dreadful time; and particularly as it relates to the manufactures and the trade in the city. At the first breaking out of the infection, there was, as it is easy to suppose, a very great fright among the people, and consequently a general stop of trade, except in provisions and necessaries of life; and even in those things, as there was a vast number of people fled, and a very great number always sick, besides the number which died, so there could not be above two-thirds, if above one-half, of the consumption of provisions in the city as used to be.

It pleased God to send a very plentiful year of corn and fruit, and not of hay or grass; by which means bread was cheap, by reason of the plenty of corn; flesh was cheap, by reason of the scarcity of grass,[1] but butter and cheese were dear for the same reason; and hay in the market, just beyond Whitechapel bars, was sold at 4*l.* per load; but that affected not the poor. There was a most excessive plenty of all sorts of fruit, such as apples, pears, plumbs, cherries,

[1] Because it was cheaper to kill cattle than to pasture them.

grapes, and they were the cheaper because of the wants of the people, but this made the poor eat them to excess, and this brought them into fluxes, griping of the guts, surfeits, and the like, which often precipitated them into the plague.

But to come to matters of trade. First, foreign exportation being stopped, or at least very much interrupted and rendered difficult, a general stop of all those manufactures followed of course, which were usually brought for exportation; and, though sometimes merchants abroad were importunate for goods, yet little was sent, the passages being so generally stopped that the English ships would not be admitted, as is said already, into their port.

This put a stop to the manufactures that were for exportation in most parts of England, except in some outports, and even that was soon stopped; for they all had the plague, in their turn. But, though this was felt all over England, yet, what was still worse, all intercourse of trade for home consumption of manufactures, especially those which usually circulated through the Londoners' hands, was stopped at once, the trade of the city being stopped.

All kinds of handicrafts in the city, etc., tradesmen and mechanics, were, as I have said before, out of employ, and this occasioned the putting off and dismissing an innumerable number of journeymen and workmen of all sorts, seeing nothing was done relating to such trades, but what might be said to be absolutely necessary.

This caused the multitude of single people in London to be unprovided for; as also of families, whose living depended upon the labour of the heads of those families; I say, this reduced them to extreme misery; and I must confess, it is for the honour of the city of London, and will be for many ages, as long as this is to be spoken of, that they were able to supply with charitable provision the wants of so many thousands of those as afterwards fell sick, and were distressed, so that it may be safely averred that nobody perished for want, at least that the magistrates had any notice given them of.

This stagnation of our manufacturing trade in the country would have put the people there to much greater difficulties, but that the master workmen, clothiers, and others, to the uttermost of their stocks and strength, kept on making their goods to keep the poor at work, believing that, as soon as the sickness should abate, they would have a quick demand in proportion to the decay of their trade at that time: but as none but those masters that were rich could do thus, and that[1] many were poor and not able, the manufacturing trade in England suffered greatly, and the poor were pinched all over England by the calamity of the city of London only.

It is true that the next year made them full amends by another terrible calamity upon the city; so that the city by one calamity impoverished and weakened the country, and by another calamity, even terrible too of its kind, enriched the country, and made them again amends: for an infinite quantity of household stuff, wearing apparel, and other things, besides whole warehouses filled with merchandize and manufactures, such as come from all parts of England, were consumed in the fire of London, the next year after this terrible visitation; it is incredible what a trade this made all over the whole kingdom, to make good the want, and to supply that loss: so that, in short, all the manufacturing hands in the nation were set on work, and were little enough for several years to supply the market and answer the demands; all foreign markets also were empty of our goods, by the stop which had been occasioned by the plague, and before an open trade was allowed again; and the prodigious demand at home falling in, joined to make a quick vent[2] for all sorts of goods; so that there never was known such a trade all over England for the time, as was in the first seven years after the plague and after the fire of London.

[1] As.

[2] Sale.

It remains, now, that I should say something of the merciful part of this terrible judgment. The last week in September, the plague being come to its crisis, its fury began to assuage. I remember my friend, Dr. Heath, coming to see me the week before, told me, he was sure the violence of it would assuage in a few days; but, when I saw the weekly bill of that week, which was the highest of the whole year, being 8297 of all diseases, I upbraided him with it, and asked him, what he had made his judgment from. His answer, however, was not so much to seek[1] as I thought it would have been. "Look you," says he; "by the number which are at this time sick and infected, there should have been twenty thousand dead the last week instead of eight thousand, if the inveterate mortal contagion had been as it was two weeks ago; for then it ordinarily killed in two or three days, now not under eight or ten; and then not above one in five recovered, whereas I have observed that now not above two in five miscarry; and observe it from me, the next bill will decrease, and you will see many more people recover than used to do; for, though a vast multitude are now everywhere infected, and as many every day fall sick, yet there will not so many die as there did, for the malignity of the distemper is abated;" adding, that he began now to hope, nay, more than hope, that the infection had passed its crisis, and was going off; and, accordingly, so it was, for the next week being, as I said, the last in September, the bill decreased almost two thousand.

It is true, the plague was still at a frightful height, and the next bill was no less than 6460, and the next to that 5720; but still my friend's observation was just, and it did appear the people did recover faster, and more in number, than they used to do; and, indeed, if it had not been so, what had been the condition of the city of London? for, according to my friend, there were not fewer than sixty thousand people at that time infected, whereof, as above,

---

[1] He was not at such a loss.

20,477 died, and near forty thousand recovered; whereas, had it been as it was before, fifty thousand of that number would very probably have died, if not more, and fifty thousand more would have sickened; for, in a word, the whole mass of people began to sicken, and it looked as if none would escape.

But this remark of my friend's appeared more evident in a few weeks more; for the decrease went on, and another week in October it decreased 1843, so that the number dead of the plague was but 2665; and the next week it decreased 1413 more, and yet it was seen plainly that there was abundance of people sick, nay, abundance more than ordinary, and abundance fell sick every day, but, as above, the malignity of the disease abated.

Such is the precipitant disposition of our people, whether it is so or not all over the world that is none of my particular business to inquire, but I saw it apparently here, that as, upon the first sight of the infection, they shunned one another, and fled from one another's houses, and from the city, with an unaccountable, and, as I thought, unnecessary fright; so now, upon this notion spreading, viz., that the distemper was not so catching as formerly, and that if it was catched, it was not so mortal; and seeing abundance of people who really fell sick recover again daily, they took to such a precipitant courage, and grew so entirely regardless of themselves and of the infection, that they made no more of the plague than of an ordinary fever, nor indeed so much. They not only went boldly into company with those who had tumours and carbuncles upon them, that were running, and consequently contagious, but eat and drank with them; nay, into their houses to visit them; and even, as I was told, into their very chambers where they lay sick.

This I could not see rational. My friend Dr. Heath allowed, and it was plain to experience, that the distemper was as catching as ever, and as many fell sick, but only he alleged that so many of those that fell sick did not die:

but I think, that, while many did die, and that at best the distemper itself was very terrible, the sores and swellings very tormenting, and the danger of death not left out of the circumstance of sickness, though not so frequent as before; all those things, together with the exceeding tediousness of the cure, the loathsomeness of the disease, and many other articles, were enough to deter any man living from a dangerous mixture with the sick people, and make them as anxious almost to avoid the infection as before.

Nay, there was another thing which made the mere catching of the distemper frightful, and that was the terrible burning of the caustics which the surgeons laid on the swellings, to bring them to break and to run, without which the danger of death was very great, even to the last; also, the insufferable torment of the swellings, which, though it might not make people raving and distracted, as they were before, and as I have given several instances of already, yet they put the patient to inexpressible torment; and those that fell into it, though they did escape with life, yet they made bitter complaints of those that had told them there was no danger, and sadly repented their rashness and folly in venturing to run into the reach of it.

Nor did this unwary conduct of the people end here; for a great many that thus cast off their cautions,[1] suffered more deeply still, and though many escaped, yet many died; and at least, it had this public mischief attending it, that it made the decrease of burials slower than it would otherwise have been; for, as this notion ran like lightning through the city, and the people's heads were possessed with it, even as soon as the first great decrease in the bills appeared, we found that the two next bills did not decrease in proportion; the reason I take to be the people's running so rashly into danger, giving up all their former cautions and care, and all shyness which they used to practise; depending that [2] the sickness would not reach them, or that, if it did, they should not die.

---

[1] Cast away caution.

[2] Depending on it that.

The physicians opposed this thoughtless humour of the people with all their might, and gave out printed directions, spreading them all over the city and suburbs, advising the people to continue reserved and to use still the utmost caution in their ordinary conduct, notwithstanding the decrease of the distemper; terrifying them with the danger of bringing a relapse upon the whole city, and telling them how such a relapse might be more fatal and dangerous than the whole visitation that had been already; with many arguments and reasons to explain and prove that part to them, and which are too long to repeat here.

But it was all to no purpose; the audacious creatures were so possessed with the first joy, and so surprised with the satisfaction of seeing a vast decrease in the weekly bills, that they were impenetrable by any new terrors, and would not be persuaded but that the bitterness of death was passed; and it was to no more purpose to talk to them than to an east wind; but they opened shops, went about streets, did business, conversed with anybody that came in their way to converse with, whether with business or without; neither inquiring of their health, or so much as being apprehensive of any danger from them, though they knew them not to be sound.

This imprudent rash conduct cost a great many their lives, who had with great care and caution shut themselves up, and kept retired, as it were, from all mankind, and had by that means, under God's providence, been preserved through all the heat of that infection.

This rash and foolish conduct of the people went so far that the ministers took notice to them [1] of it, and laid before them both the folly and danger of it; and this checked it a little, so that they grew more cautious; but it had another effect, which they could not check, for as the first rumour had spread, not over the city only, but into the country, it had the like effect, and the people were so tired with being so long from London, and so eager to come back, that they flocked to town without fear or forecast,[1] and began to show themselves in the streets, as if all the danger was over: it was, indeed, surprising to see it, for though there died still from a thousand to eighteen hundred a week, yet the people flocked to town as if all had been well.

---

[1] Made them take note.

The consequence of this was that the bills increased again four hundred the very first week in November; and, if I might believe the physicians, there were above three thousand fell sick that week, most of them new comers, too.

One John Cock, a barber in St. Martin's-le-Grand, was an eminent example of this; I mean of the hasty return of the people when the plague was abated. This John Cock had left the town with his whole family, and locked up his house, and was gone into the country as many others did; and finding the plague so decreased in November that there died but 905 per week of all diseases, he ventured home again; he had in his family ten persons, that is to say, himself and wife, five children, two apprentices, and a maid servant; he had not been returned to his house above a week, and began to open his shop, and carry on his trade, but the distemper broke out in his family, and within about five days they all died, except one; that is to say, himself, his wife, all his five children, and his two apprentices; and only the maid remained alive.

But the mercy of God was greater to the rest than we had reason to expect; for the malignity, as I have said, of the distemper was spent, the contagion was exhausted, and also the wintry weather came on apace, and the air was clear and cold, with some sharp frosts; and this increasing still, most of those that had fallen sick recovered, and the health of the city began to return. There were, indeed, some returns of the distemper, even in the month of December, and the bills increased near a hundred; but it went off again, and so in a short while things began to return to their own channel. And wonderful it was to see how populous the city was again all on a sudden; so that a stranger could not miss the numbers that were lost, neither was there any miss of the inhabitants as to their dwellings. Few or no empty houses were to be seen, or if there were some, there was no want of tenants for them.

---

[1] Forethought.

I wish I could say that, as the city had a new face, so the manners of the people had a new appearance: I doubt not but there were many that retained a sincere sense of their deliverance, and that were heartily thankful to that Sovereign Hand that had protected them in so dangerous a time; it would be very uncharitable to judge otherwise in a city so populous, and where the people were so devout as they were here in the time of the visitation itself; but, except what of this was to be found in particular families and faces, it must be acknowledged that the general practice of the people was just as it was before, and very little difference was to be seen.

Some, indeed, said things were worse, that the morals of the people declined from this very time; that the people, hardened by the danger they had been in, like seamen after a storm is over, were more wicked and more stupid, more bold and hardened in their vices and immoralities than they were before: but I will not carry it so far, neither; it would take up a history of no small length to give a particular of all the gradations by which the course of things in this city came to be restored again, and to run in their own channel as they did before.

Some parts of England were now infected as violently as London had been; the cities of Norwich, Peterborough, Lincoln, Colchester, and other places were now visited; and the magistrates of London began to set rules for our conduct as to corresponding with those cities: it is true, we could not pretend to forbid their people coming to London, because it was impossible to know them asunder, so, after many consultations, the lord mayor and court of aldermen were obliged to drop it: all they could do was to warn and caution the people not to entertain in their houses, or converse with, any people who they knew came from such infected places.

But they might as well have talked to the air, for the people of London thought themselves so plague-free now that they were past all admonitions; they seemed to depend upon it that the air was restored, and that the air was like a man that had had the small-pox, not capable of being infected again. This revived that notion that the infection was all in the air, that there was no such thing as contagion from the sick people to the sound; and so strongly did this whimsy prevail among people, that they run altogether promiscuously, sick and well; not the Mahometans, who, prepossessed with the principle of predestination, value[1] nothing of contagion, let it be in what it will, could be more obstinate than the people of London; they that were perfectly sound, and came out of the wholesome air, as we call it, into the city, made nothing of going into the same houses and chambers, nay, even into the same beds, with those that had the distemper upon them, and were not recovered.

Some, indeed, paid for their audacious boldness with the price of their lives; an infinite number fell sick, and the physicians had more work than ever, only with this difference, that more of their patients recovered, that is to say, they generally recovered; but certainly there were more people infected and fell sick now, when there did not die above a thousand or twelve hundred a week, than there was when there died five or six thousand a week; so entirely negligent were the people at that time in the great and dangerous case of health and infection, and so ill were they able to take or except[2] of the advice of those who cautioned them for their good.

The people being thus returned, as it were in general, it was very strange to find that, in their inquiring after their friends, some whole families were so entirely swept away that there was no remembrance of them left; neither was anybody to be found to possess or show any title to that little they had left; for in such cases, what was to be found was generally embezzled and purloined, some gone one way, some another.

---

[1] Think.

[2] Accept.

It was said such abandoned effects came to the king as the universal heir; upon which we are told, and I suppose it was in part true, that the king granted all such as deodands[1] to the lord mayor and court of aldermen of London, to be applied to the use of the poor, of whom there were very many. For it is to be observed, that, though the occasions of relief, and the objects of distress were very many more in the time of the violence of the plague, than now after all was over, yet the distress of the poor was more now a great deal than it was then, because all the sluices of general charity were shut; people supposed the main occasion to be over, and so stopped their hands; whereas particular objects were still very moving, and the distress of those that were poor was very great indeed.

Though the health of the city was now very much restored, yet foreign trade did not begin to stir, neither would foreigners admit our ships into their ports for a great while; as for the Dutch, the misunderstandings between our court and them had broken out into a war the year before, so that our trade that way was wholly interrupted; but Spain and Portugal, Italy and Barbary, as also Hamburg, and all the ports in the Baltic, these were all shy of us a great while and would not restore trade with us for many months.

The distemper sweeping away such multitudes, as I have observed, many, if not all, of the out-parishes were obliged to make new burying-grounds, besides that I have mentioned in Bunhill Fields, some of which were continued, and remain in use to this day; but others were left off, and which, I confess, I mention with some reflection,[1] being converted into other uses, or built upon afterwards, the dead bodies were disturbed, abused, dug up again, some even before the flesh of them was perished from the bones, and removed like dung or rubbish to other places. Some of those which came within the reach of my observations are as follows:—

---

[1] Articles devoted to God; the technical term for "personal chattels which had been the immediate occasion of the death of a rational creature, and for that reason given to God—that is, forfeited to the king to be applied to pious uses and distributed in alms."—*Century Dictionary*.

First. A piece of ground beyond Goswell Street, near Mount Mill, being some of the remains of the old lines or fortifications of the city, where abundance were buried promiscuously from the parishes of Aldersgate, Clerkenwell, and even out of the city. This ground, as I take it, was since made a physic garden,[2] and after that, has been built upon.

Second. A piece of ground just over the Black Ditch, as it was then called, at the end of Holloway Lane, in Shoreditch parish; it has been since made a yard for keeping hogs and for other ordinary uses, but is quite out of use as a burying ground.

Third. The upper end of Hand Alley, in Bishopsgate Street, which was then a green field, and was taken in particularly for Bishopsgate parish, though many of the carts out of the city brought their dead thither also, particularly out of the parish of St. Allhallows on the Wall: this place I cannot mention without much regret. It was, as I remember, about two or three years after the plague was ceased that Sir Robert Clayton[3] came to be possessed of the ground; it was reported, how true I know not, that it fell to the king for want of heirs, all those who had any right to it being carried off by the pestilence, and that Sir Robert Clayton obtained a grant of it from King Charles

---

[1] Adverse criticism.

[2] For herbs used in preparing drugs.

[3] Lord mayor in 1679-80.

II. But, however he came by it, certain it is the ground was let out to build on, or built upon by his order. The first house built upon it was a large fair house, still standing, which faces the street or way now called Hand Alley, which, though called an alley, is as wide as a street: the houses in the same row with that house northward are built on the very same ground where the poor people were buried, and the bodies, on opening the ground for the foundations, were dug up, some of them remaining so plain to be seen that the women's skulls were distinguished by their long hair, and of others the flesh was not quite perished; so that the people began to exclaim loudly against it, and some suggested that it might endanger a a return of the contagion: after which the bones and bodies, as fast as they came at them, were carried to another part of the same ground, and thrown altogether into a deep pit, dug on purpose, which now is to be known, in that it is not built on, but is a passage to another house at the upper end of Rose Alley, just against the door of a meeting-house, which has been built there many years since; and the ground is palisadoed off from the rest of the passage in a little square; there lie the bones and remains of near two thousand bodies, carried by the dead-carts to their grave in that one year.

Fourth. Besides this, there was a piece of ground in Moorfields, by the going into the street which is now called Old Bethlem, which was enlarged much, though not wholly taken in, on the same occasion.

N.B. The author of this journal lies buried in that very ground, being at his own desire, his sister having been buried there a few years before.

Fifth. Stepney parish, extending itself from the east part of London to the north, even to the very edge of Shoreditch churchyard, had a piece of ground taken in to bury their dead, close to the said churchyard; and which, for that very reason, was left open, and is since, I suppose, taken into the same churchyard: and they had also two other burying-places in Spitalfields, one, where since a chapel or tabernacle has been built for ease to this great parish, and another in Petticoat Lane.

There were no less than five other grounds made use of for the parish of Stepney at that time; one where now stands the parish church of St. Paul, Shadwell, and the other where now stands the parish church of St. John, at Wapping, both which had not the names of parishes at that time, but were belonging to Stepney parish.

I could name many more, but these coming within my particular knowledge, the circumstance I thought made it of use to record them: from the whole, it may be observed that they were obliged in this time of distress to take in new burying-grounds in most of the out-parishes for laying the prodigious numbers of people which died in so short a space of time; but why care was not taken to keep those places separate from ordinary uses, that so the bodies might rest undisturbed, that I cannot answer for, and must confess I think it was wrong; who were to blame I know not.

I should have mentioned, that the Quakers[1] had at that time also a burying-ground set apart to their use, and which they still make use of, and they had also a particular dead-cart to fetch their dead from their houses; and the famous Solomon Eagle, who, as I mentioned before,[2] had predicted the plague as a judgment, and run naked through the streets, telling the people that it was come upon them to punish them for their sins, had his own wife died[3] the very next day of the plague, and was carried, one of the first, in the Quaker's dead-cart to their new burying-ground.

I might have thronged this account with many more remarkable things which occurred in the time of the infection, and particularly what passed between the lord mayor and the court, which was then at Oxford, and what directions were from time to time received from the government for their conduct on this critical occasion. But really the court concerned themselves so little, and that little they did was of so small import, that I do not see it of much moment to mention any part of it here, except that of appointing a monthly fast in the city, and the sending the royal charity to the relief of the poor; both which I have mentioned before.

---

[1] For information in regard to the peculiarities and tenets of the early Quakers, the student should consult an encyclopædia.

[2] See page 98.

[3] Die.

Great was the reproach thrown upon those physicians who left their patients during the sickness; and, now they came to town again, nobody cared to employ them; they were called deserters, and frequently bills were set up on their doors, and written, "Here is a doctor to be let!" So that several of those physicians were fain for a while to sit still and look about them, or at least remove their dwellings and set up in new places, and among new acquaintance. The like was the case with the clergy, whom the people were indeed very abusive to, writing verses and scandalous reflections upon them; setting upon the church door, "Here is a pulpit to be let;" or, sometimes, "to be sold," which was worse.

It was not the least of our misfortunes that, with our infection, when it ceased, there did not cease the spirit of strife and contention, slander and reproach, which was really the great troubler of the nation's peace before: it was said to be the remains of the old animosities which had so lately involved us all in blood and disorder. But as the late Act of Indemnity[1] had lain[2] asleep the quarrel itself, so the government had recommended family and personal peace, upon all occasions, to the whole nation.

But it could not be obtained, and particularly after the ceasing of the plague in London, when any one had seen the condition which the people had been in, and how they caressed one another at that time, promised to have more charity for the future, and to raise no more reproaches: I say, any one that had seen them then would have thought they would have come together with another spirit at last. But, I say, it could not be obtained; the quarrel remained, the church[1] and the presbyterians[2] were incompatible: as soon as the plague was removed, the dissenting ousted ministers, who had supplied the pulpits which were deserted by the incumbents, retired; they could expect no other but[3] that they[4] should immediately fall upon them and harass them with their penal laws,[5] accept their preaching while they were sick, and persecute them as soon as they were recovered again; this even we, that were of the church, thought was hard, and could by no means approve of it.

---

[1] For all political offences committed between 1637 and 1660; passed in 1660 at the time of the Restoration.

[2] Laid.

But it was the government, and we could say nothing to hinder it; we could only say it was not our doing and we could not answer for it.

On the other hand, the dissenters reproaching those ministers of the church with going away, and deserting their charge, abandoning the people in their danger, and when they had most need of comfort, and the like, this we could by no means approve; for all men have not the same faith, and the same courage, and the Scripture commands us to judge the most favourably, and according to charity.

A plague is a formidable enemy, and is armed with terrors that every man is not sufficiently fortified to resist, or prepared to stand the shock against. It is very certain that a great many of the clergy, who were in circumstances to do it, withdrew, and fled for the safety of their lives; but it is true, also, that a great many of them stayed, and many of them fell in the calamity, and in the discharge of their duty.

It is true some of the dissenting, turned-out ministers stayed, and their courage is to be commended and highly valued; but these were not abundance. It cannot be said that they all stayed, and that none retired into the country, any more than it can be said of the church clergy that they all went away; neither did all those that went away go without substituting curates and others in their places to do the offices needful, and to visit the sick as far as it was practicable; so that, upon the whole, an allowance of charity might have been made on both sides, and we should have considered that such a time as this of 1665 is not to be paralleled in history, and that it is not the stoutest courage that will always support men in such cases. I had not said this, but had rather chosen to record the courage and religious zeal of those of both sides, who did hazard themselves for the service of the poor people in their distress, without remembering that any failed in their duty on either side, but the want of temper among us has made the contrary to this necessary; some that stayed, not only boasting too much of themselves, but reviling those that fled, branding them with cowardice, deserting their flocks, and acting the part of the hireling,[1] and the like. I recommend it to the charity of all good people to look back, and reflect duly upon the terrors of the time, and whoever does so will see that it is not an ordinary strength that could support it; it was not like appearing in the head of an army, or charging a body of horse in the field; but it was charging death itself on his pale horse:[2] to stay was indeed to die, and it could be esteemed nothing less; especially as things appeared at the latter end of August and the beginning of September, and as there was reason to expect them at that time; for no man expected, and I dare say, believed, that the distemper would take so sudden a turn as it did, and fall, immediately, two thousand in a week, when there was such a prodigious number of people sick at that time as it was known there was; and then it was that many shifted away that had stayed most of the time before.

---

[1] The Church of England.

[2] The Presbyterians were hostile to the Episcopalian system of church government by bishops.

[3] Nothing else than.

[4] The authorized clergy.

[5] Laws forbidding dissenters to preach.

Besides, if God gave strength to some more than to others, was it to boast of their ability to abide the stroke, and upbraid those that had not the same gift and support, or ought they not rather to have been humble and thankful, if they were rendered more useful than their brethren ?

---

[1] *St. John* x. 12.

[2] *Revelation* vi. 8.

I think it ought to be recorded to the honour of such men, as well clergy as physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, magistrates, and officers of every kind, as also all useful people, who ventured their lives in discharge of their duty, as most certainly all such as stayed did to the last degree, and several of these kinds did not only venture, but lost, their lives on that sad occasion.

I was once making a list of all such, I mean of all those professions and employments who thus died, as I call it, in the way of their duty ; but it was impossible for a private man to come at a certainty in the particulars. I only remember, that there died sixteen clergymen, two aldermen, five physicians, thirteen surgeons, within the city and liberties, before the beginning of September. But this being, as I said before, the crisis and extremity of the infection, it can be no complete list. As to inferior people, I think there died six and forty constables and headboroughs[1] in the two parishes of Stepney and Whitechapel ; but I could not carry my list on, for when the violent rage of the distemper, in September, came upon us, it drove us out of all measure. Men did then no more die by tale and by number ; they might put out a weekly bill, and call them seven or eight thousand, or what they pleased ; it is certain they died by heaps, and were buried by heaps ; that is to say, without account. And if I might believe some people, who were more abroad and more conversant with those things than I, though I was public enough for one that had no more business to do than I had ; I say, if we may believe them, there was not many less buried those first three weeks in September than twenty thousand per week ; however the others aver the truth of it, yet I rather choose to keep to the public account ; seven or eight thousand per week is enough to make good all that I have said of the terror of those times; and it is much to the satisfaction of me that write, as well as those that read, to be able to say that everything is set down with moderation, and rather within compass than beyond it.

---

[1] Heads of boroughs, officers with the duties of petty constables.

Upon all these accounts, I say, I could wish, when we were recovered, our conduct had been more distinguished for charity and kindness, in remembrance of the past calamity, and not so much in valuing ourselves upon our boldness in staying, as if all men were cowards that fly from the hand of God, or that those who stay do not sometimes owe their courage to their ignorance, and despising the hand of their Maker, which is a criminal kind of desperation, and not a true courage.

I cannot but leave it upon record that the civil officers, such as constables, headboroughs, lord-mayor's and sheriff's men, also parish officers, whose business it was to take charge of the poor, did their duties, in general, with as much courage as any, and, perhaps, with more; because their work was attended with more hazards, and lay more among the poor, who were more subject to be infected, and in the most pitiful plight when they were taken with the infection. But then it must be added, too, that a great number of them died; indeed, it was scarcely possible it should be otherwise.

I have not said one word here about the physic or preparations that were ordinarily made use of on this terrible occasion; I mean we that frequently went abroad up and down the streets, as I did; much of this was talked of in the books and bills[1] of our quack doctors, of whom I have said enough already. It may, however, be added, that the college of physicians were daily publishing several preparations, which they had considered of in the process of their practice; and which, being to be had in print, I avoid repeating them for that reason.

---

[1] Advertisements.

One thing I could not help observing, what befel one of the quacks, who published that he had a most excellent preservative against the plague, which whoever kept about them should never be infected, or liable to infection. This man, who, we may reasonably suppose, did not go abroad without some of this excellent preservative in his pocket, yet was taken by the distemper, and carried off in two or three days.

I am not of the number of the physic-haters or physic-despisers ; on the contrary, I have often mentioned the regard I had to the dictates of my particular friend Dr. Heath ; but yet I must acknowledge I made use of little or nothing, except, as I have observed, to keep a preparation of strong scent, to have ready in case I met with anything of offensive smells, or went too near any burying-place or dead body.

Neither did I do, what I know some did, keep the spirits high and hot with cordials, and wine, and such things, and which, as I observed, one learned physician used himself so much to, as that he could not leave them off when the infection was quite gone, and so became a sot for all hislife after.

I remember my friend the doctor used to say that there was a certain set of drugs and preparations which were all certainly good and useful in the case of an infection ; out of which, or with which, physicians might make an infinite variety of medicines, as the ringers of bells make several hundred different rounds of music, by the changing and order of sound but in six bells ; and that all these preparations shall be really very good. "Therefore," said he, "I do not wonder that so vast a throng of medicines is offered in the present calamity ; and almost every physician prescribes or prepares a different thing, as his judgment or experience guides him ; but," says my friend, "let all the prescriptions of all the physicians in London be examined ; and it will be found that they are all compounded of the same things, with such variations only as the particular fancy of the doctor leads him to ; so that," says he, "every man, judging a little of his own constitution and manner of his living, and circumstances of his being infected, may direct his own medicines out of the ordinary drugs and preparations. Only that," says he, "some recommend one thing as most sovereign, and some another; some," says he, "think that Pill. Ruff.,[1] which is called itself the anti-pestilential pill, is the best preparation that can be made; others think that Venice Treacle[2] is sufficient of itself to resist the contagion, and I," says he, "think as both these think, viz., that the first is good to take beforehand, to prevent it, and the last, if touched, to expel it." According to this opinion, I several times took Venice Treacle, and a sound sweat upon it, and thought myself as well fortified against the infection as any one could be fortified by the power of physic.

As for quackery and mountebank, of which the town was so full, I listened to none of them, and observed, often since, with some wonder, that, for two years after the plague, I scarcely ever heard one of them about the town. Some fancied they were all swept away in the infection to a man, and were for calling it a particular mark of God's vengeance upon them, for leading the poor people into the pit of destruction, merely for the lucre of a little money they got by them; but I cannot go that length neither; that abundance of them died is certain—many of them came within the reach of my own knowledge; but that all of them were swept off, I much question. I believe, rather, they fled into the country, and tried their practices upon the people there, who were in apprehension of the infection before it came among them.

This, however, is certain, not a man of them appeared, for a great while, in or about London. There were, indeed, several doctors, who published bills recommending their several physical preparations for cleansing the body, as they call it, after the plague, and needful, as they said, for such people to take, who had been visited and had been cured; whereas, I must own, I believe that it was the opinion of the most eminent physicians of that time that the plague was itself a sufficient purge; and that those who escaped the infection needed no physic to cleanse their bodies of any other things; the running sores, the tumours, etc., which were broken and kept open by the direction of the physicians, having sufficiently cleansed them; and that all other distempers, and causes of distempers, were effectually carried off that way; and as the physicians gave this as their opinion, wherever they came, the quacks got little business.

---

[1] *Pilulæ Rufi*, an aperient, into the composition of which enter aloes and myrrh.

[2] A cordial of many ingredients, including opium.

There were, indeed, several little hurries which happened after the decrease of the plague, and which, whether they were contrived to fright and disorder the people, as some imagined, I cannot say, but sometimes we were told the plague would return by such a time; and the famous Solomon Eagle, the naked Quaker I have mentioned, prophesied evil tidings every day; and several others telling us that London had not been sufficiently scourged, and the sorer and severer strokes were yet behind: had they stopped there, or had they descended to particulars, and told us that the city should be the next year destroyed by fire, then, indeed, when we had seen it come to pass, we should not have been to blame to have paid more than common respect to their prophetic spirits; at least, we should have wondered at them, and have been more serious in our inquiries after the meaning of it, and whence they had the foreknowledge; but as they generally told us of a relapse into the plague, we have had no concern since that about them; yet, by those frequent clamours, we were all kept with some kind of apprehensions constantly upon us; and, if any died suddenly, or if the spotted fevers at any time increased, we were presently alarmed; much more if the number of the plague increased; for, to the end of the year, there were always between two and three hundred of the plague. On any of these occasoins, I say, we were alarmed anew.

Those who remember the city of London before the fire, must remember that there was then no such place as that we now call Newgate Market; but, in the middle of the street, which is now called Blow Bladder Street, and which had its name from the butchers, who used to kill and dress their sheep there (and who, it seems, had a custom to blow up their meat with pipes, to make it look thicker and fatter than it was, and were punished there for it by the lord mayor), I say, from the end of the street towards Newgate, there stood two long rows of shambles for the selling meat.

It was in those shambles, that two persons falling down dead as they were buying meat, gave rise to a rumour that the meat was all infected, which, though it might affright the people, and spoiled the market for two or three days, yet it appeared plainly afterwards that there was nothing of truth in the suggestion: but nobody can account for the possession of fear when it takes hold of the mind. However, it pleased God, by the continuing of the winter weather, so to restore the health of the city that by February following we reckoned the distemper quite ceased, and then we were not easily frighted again.

There was still a question among the learned, and at first perplexed the people a little; and that was, in what manner to purge the houses and goods where the plague had been, and how to render them[1] habitable again which had been left empty during the time of the plague; abundance of perfumes and preparations were prescribed by physicians, some of one kind, some of another; in which the people who listened to them put themselves to a great, and, indeed, in my opinion, to an unnecessary expense; and the poorer people, who only set open their windows night and day, burnt brimstone, pitch, and gunpowder, and such things, in their rooms, did as well as the best; nay, the eager people, who, as I said above, came home in haste, and at all hazards, found little or no inconvenience in their houses, nor in their goods, and did little or nothing to them.

---

[1] Those.

However, in general, prudent, cautious people did enter into some measures for airing and sweetening their houses, and burnt perfumes, incense, benjamin,[1] resin, and sulphur, in their rooms close shut up, and then let the air carry it all out with a blast of gunpowder; others caused large fires to be made all day and all night, for several days and nights. By the same token that[2] two or three were pleased to set their houses on fire, and so effectually sweetened them by burning them down to the ground; as particularly one at Ratcliff, one in Holborn, and one at Westminster, besides two or three that were set on fire, but the fire was happily got out again before it went far enough to burn down the houses; and one citizen's servant, I think it was in Thames Street, carried so much gunpowder into his master's house, for clearing it of the infection, and managed it so foolishly, that he blew up part of the roof of the house. But the time was not fully come that the city was to be purged with fire, nor was it far off, for within nine months more I saw it all lying in ashes; when, as some of our quaking philosophers[3] pretend, the seeds of the plague were entirely destroyed, and not before; a notion too ridiculous to speak of here, since had the seeds of the plague remained in the houses, not to be destroyed but by fire, how has it been that they have not since broken out? seeing all those buildings in the suburbs and liberties, all in the great parishes of Stepney, Whitechapel, Aldgate, Bishopsgate, Shoreditch, Cripplegate, and St. Giles's, where the fire never came, and where the plague raged with the greatest violence, remain still in the same condition they were in before.

[1] Benzoin.

[2] A phrase introducing a corroborative circumstance.

[3] Referring to the Quakers mentioned above, page 245.

But to leave these things just as I found them, it was certain that those people who were more than ordinarily cautious of their health, did take particular directions for what they called seasoning of their houses, and abundance of costly things were consumed on that account, which, I cannot but say, not only seasoned those houses as they desired, but filled the air with very grateful and wholesome smells, which others had the share of the benefit of, as well as those who were at the expenses of them.

Though the poor came to town very precipitantly, as I have said, yet, I must say, the rich made no such haste. The men of business, indeed, came up, but many of them did not bring their families to town till the spring came on, and that they saw reason to depend upon it that the plague would not return.

The court, indeed, came up soon after Christmas; but the nobility and gentry, except such as depended upon, and had employment under the administration, did not come so soon.

I should have taken notice here that, notwithstanding the violence of the plague in London and other places, yet it was very observable that it was never on board the fleet, and yet for some time there was a strange press[1] in the river, and even in the streets, for seamen to man the fleet. But it was in the beginning of the year, when the plague was scarce begun, and not at all come down to that part of the city where they usually press for seamen; and though a war with the Dutch was not at all grateful to the people at that time, and the seamen went with a kind of reluctancy into the service, and many complained of being dragged into it by force, yet it proved, in the event, a happy violence to several of them, who had[2] probably perished in the general calamity, and who, after the summer service was over, though they had cause to lament the desolation of their families, who, when they came back, were many

[1] The press gang, seizing men for the navy.

[2] Would have.

of them in their graves; yet they had room to be thankful that they were carried out of the reach of it, though so much against their wills. We, indeed, had a hot war with the Dutch that year, and one very great engagement at sea,[1] in which the Dutch were worsted; but we lost a great many men and some ships; but, as I observed, the plague was not in the fleet, and when they came to lay up the ships in the river, the violent part of it began to abate.

I would be glad if I could close the account of this melancholy year with some particular examples historically; I mean of the thankfulness to God, our Preserver, for our being delivered from this dreadful calamity. Certainly the circumstances of the deliverance, as well as the terrible enemy we were delivered from, called upon the whole nation for it; the circumstances of the deliverance were, indeed, very remarkable, as I have in part mentioned already; and, particularly, the dreadful condition which we were all in, when we were, to the surprise of the whole town, made joyful with the hope of a stop to the infection.

Nothing but the immediate finger of God, nothing but omnipotent power could have done it; the contagion despised all medicine, death raged in every corner; and had it gone on as it did then, a few weeks more would have cleared the town of all and everything that had a soul. Men everywhere began to despair, every heart failed them for fear; people were made desperate through the anguish of their souls, and the terrors of death sat in the very faces and countenances of the people.

In that very moment, when we might very well say, "Vain was the help of man";[2] I say, in that very moment it pleased God, with a most agreeable surprise, to cause the fury of it to abate, even of itself; and the malignity declining, as I have said, though infinite numbers were sick, yet fewer died; and the very first week's bill decreased 1843, a vast number indeed.

[1] At Lowestoft.

[2] *Psalm* lx. 11.

It is impossible to express the change that appeared in the very countenances of the people, that Thursday morning, when the weekly bill came out: it might have been perceived in their countenances that a secret surprise and smile of joy sat on everybody's face; they shook one another by the hands in the streets, who would hardly go on the same side of the way with one another before; where the streets were not too broad, they would open their windows and call from one house to another, and asked how they did, and if they had heard the good news that the plague was abated; some would return, when they said good news, and ask, "What good news?" And when they answered that the plague was abated, and the bills decreased almost two thousand, they would cry out, "God be praised;" and would weep aloud for joy, telling them they had heard nothing of it; and such was the joy of the people that it was as it were life to them from the grave. I could almost set down as many extravagant things done in the excess of their joy as of their grief; but that would be to lessen the value of it.

I must confess myself to have been very much dejected just before this happened; for the prodigious numbers that were taken sick the week or two before, besides those that died, was such, and the lamentations were so great everywhere, that a man must have seemed to have acted even against his reason if he had so much as have expected to escape; and as there was hardly a house but mine in all my neighbourhood but what was infected, so had it gone on, it would not have been long that there would have been any more neighbours to be infected; indeed, it is hardly credible what dreadful havoc the last three weeks had made; for if I might believe the person whose calculations I always found very well grounded, there were not less than thirty thousand people dead, and near one hundred thousand fallen sick in the three weeks I speak of; for the number that sickened was surprising, indeed, it was astonishing, and those whose courage upheld them all the time before, sunk under it now.

In the middle of their distress, when the condition of the city of London was so truly calamitous, just then it pleased God, as it were, by his immediate hand, to disarm this enemy ; the poison was taken out of the sting ; it was wonderful : even the physicians themselves were surprised at it : wherever they visited they found their patients better ; either they had sweated kindly, or the tumours were broke, or the carbuncles went down, and the inflammations round them changed colour, or the fever was gone, or the violent headache was assuaged, or some good symptom was in the case ; so that in a few days everybody was recovering ; whole families that were infected and down, that had ministers praying with them, and expected death every hour, were revived and healed, and none died at all out of them.

Nor was this by any new medicine found out, or new method of cure discovered, or by any experience in the operation which the physicians or surgeons attained to ; but it was evidently from the secret invisible hand of Him that had at first sent this disease as a judgment upon us ; and let the atheistic part of mankind call my saying what they please, it is no enthusiasm.[1] It was acknowledged, at that time, by all mankind. The disease was enervated, and its malignity spent, and let it proceed from whencesoever it will, let the philosophers search for reasons in nature to account for it by, and labour as much as they will to lessen the debt they owe to their Maker ; those physicians who had the least share of religion in them, were obliged to acknowledge that it was all supernatural, that it was extraordinary, and that no account could be given of it.

If I should say that this is a visible summons to us all to thankfulness, especially we that were under the terror of its increase, perhaps it may be thought by some, after the sense[2] of the thing was over, an officious canting of religious things, preaching a sermon instead of writing a history ; making myself a teacher, instead of giving my observations of things; and this restrains me very much from going on here, as I might otherwise do; but if ten lepers were healed, and but one returned to give thanks,[1] I desire to be as that one, and to be thankful for myself.

---

[1] Extravagance.

[2] The actual feeling and experience.

Nor will I deny but there were abundance of people who to all appearance were very thankful at that time: for their mouths were stopped, even the mouths of those whose hearts were not extraordinarily long affected with it; but the impression was so strong at that time that it could not be resisted—no, not by the worst of the people.

It was a common thing to meet people in the street that were strangers and that we knew nothing at all of, expressing their surprise. Going one day through Aldgate, and a pretty many people being passing and repassing, there comes a man out of the end of the Minories, and looking a little up the street and down, he throws his hands abroad, "Lord, what an alteration is here! Why, last week I came along here, and hardly anybody was to be seen." Another man, I heard him, adds to his words, "'Tis all wonderful; 'tis all a dream." "Blessed be God," says a third man, "and let us give thanks to him, for 'tis all his own doing." Human help and human skill were at an end. These were all strangers to one another, but such salutations as these were frequent in the street every day; and in spite of a loose behaviour, the very common people went along the streets, giving God thanks for their deliverance.

It was now, as I said before, the people had cast off all apprehensions, and that too fast; indeed, we were no more afraid now to pass by a man with a white cap upon his head, or with a cloth wrapt round his neck, or with his leg limping, occasioned by the sores in his groin, all which were frightful to the last degree but the week before; but now the street was full of them, and these poor recovering creatures, give them their due, appeared very sensible of their unexpected deliverance; and I should wrong them very much, if I should not acknowledge that I believe many of them were really thankful; but I must own that for the generality of the people it might too justly be said of them, as was said of the children of Israel, after their being delivered from the host of Pharaoh, when they passed the Red sea, and looked back and saw the Egyptians overwhelmed in the water,[1] viz., "That they sang his praise, but they soon forgot his works."

---

[1] *St. Luke* xvii. 12–19.

I can go no farther here. I should be counted censorious, and perhaps unjust, if I should enter into the unpleasing work of reflecting, whatever cause there was for it, upon the unthankfulness and return of all manner of wickedness among us, which I was so much an eye-witness of myself. I shall conclude the account of this calamitous year, therefore, with a coarse but a sincere stanza of my own, which I placed at the end of my ordinary memorandums, the same year they were written;—

A dreadful plague in London was,
  In the year sixty-five,
Which swept an hundred thousand souls
  Away; yet I alive.

H. F.

[1] *Exodus* xiv., xv.

THE END

EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY.

MESSRS. LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO. have the pleasure to state that they are now publishing a short series of books treating of the history of America, under the general title EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY. The series is under the editorship of DR. ALBERT BUSHNELL HART, Assistant Professor of History in Harvard College, who has also prepared all the maps for the several volumes. Each volume contains about 300 pages, similar in size and style to the page of the volumes in Messrs. Longmans' series, 'Epochs of Modern History,' with full marginal analysis, working bibliographies, maps, and index. The volumes are issued separately, and each is complete in itself. The volumes now ready provide a continuous history of the United States from the foundation of the Colonies to the present time, suited to and intended for class use as well as for general reading and reference.

⁂ *The volumes of this series already issued have been adopted for use as text-books in nearly all the leading Colleges and in many Normal Schools and other institutions. A prospectus, showing Contents and scope of each volume, specimen pages, etc., will be sent on application to the Publishers.*

I. THE COLONIES, 1492–1750.

By REUBEN GOLD THWAITES, Secretary of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; author of "Historic Waterways," etc. With four colored maps. pp. xviii.–301. Cloth. $1.25.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY.

"I beg leave to acknowledge your courtesy in sending me a copy of the first volume in the series of 'Epochs of American History,' which I have read with great interest and satisfaction. I am pleased, as everyone must be, with the mechanical execution of the book, with the maps, and with the fresh and valuable 'Suggestions' and 'References.' . . . . The work itself appears to me to be quite remarkable for its comprehensiveness, and it presents a vast array of subjects in a way that is admirably fair, clear and orderly."—Professor MOSES COIT TYLER, Ithaca, N. Y.

WILLIAMS COLLEGE.

"It is just the book needed for college students, not too brief to be uninteresting, admirable in its plan, and well furnished with references to accessible authorities."—Professor RICHARD A. RICE, Williamstown, Mass.

VASSAR COLLEGE.

"Perhaps the best recommendation of 'Thwaites' American Colonies' is the fact that the day after it was received I ordered copies for class-room use. The book is admirable."—Professor LUCY M. SALMON, Poughkeepsie, N. Y.

"All that could be desired. This volume is more like a fair treatment of the whole subject of the colonies than any work of the sort yet produced."
—*The Critic.*

"The subject is virtually a fresh one as approached by Mr. Thwaites. It is a pleasure to call especial attention to some most helpful bibliographical notes provided at the head of each chapter."—*The Nation.*

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY.

II. FORMATION OF THE UNION, 1750–1829.

By ALBERT BUSHNELL HART, PH.D. Assistant Professor of History in Harvard University, Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Author of "Introduction to the Study of Federal Government," "Epoch Maps," etc. With five colored maps. pp. xx.–278. Cloth. $1.25.

The second volume of the EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY aims to follow out the principles laid down for "THE COLONIES,"—the study of causes rather than of events, the development of the American nation out of scattered and inharmonious colonies. The throwing off of English control, the growth out of narrow political conditions, the struggle against foreign domination, and the extension of popular government, are all parts of the uninterrupted process of the Formation of the Union.

LELAND STANFORD JR. UNIVERSITY.

"The large and sweeping treatment of the subject, which shows the true relations of the events preceding and following the revolution, to the revolution itself, is a real addition to the literature of the subject; while the bibliography prefixed to each chapter, adds incalculably to the value of the work."—MARY SHELDON BARNES, Palo Alto, Cal.

"It is a careful and conscientious study of the period and its events, and should find a place among the text-books of our public schools."

—*Boston Transcript.*

"Professor Hart has compressed a vast deal of information into his volume, and makes many things most clear and striking. His maps, showing the territorial growth of the United States, are extremely interesting."

—*New York Times.*

". . . The causes of the Revolution are clearly and cleverly condensed into a few pages. . . . The maps in the work are singularly useful even to adults. There are five of these, which are alone worth the price of the volume."

—*Magazine of American History.*

"The formation period of our nation is treated with much care and with great precision. Each chapter is prefaced with copious references to authorities, which are valuable to the student who desires to pursue his reading more extensively. There are five valuable maps showing the growth of our country by successive stages and repeated acquisition of territory."

—*Boston Advertiser.*

"Dr. Hart is not only a master of the art of condensation, . . . he is what is even of greater importance, an interpreter of history. He perceives the logic of historic events; hence, in his condensation, he does not neglect proportion, and more than once he gives the student valuable clues to the solution of historical problems."—*Atlantic Monthly.*

"A valuable volume of a valuable series. The author has written with a full knowledge of his subject, and we have little to say except in praise."

—*English Historical Review.*

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

EPOCHS OF AMERICAN HISTORY.

III. DIVISION AND RE-UNION, 1829-1889.

By Woodrow Wilson, Ph.D., LL.D., Professor of Jurisprudence in Princeton College; Author of "Congressional Government," "The State—Elements of Historical and Practical Politics," etc., etc. With five colored Maps. 346 pages. Cloth, $1.25.

"We regret that we have not space for more quotations from this uncommonly strong, impartial, interesting book. Giving only enough facts to elucidate the matter discussed, it omits no important questions. It furnishes the reader clear-cut views of the right and the wrong of them all. It gives admirable pen-portraits of the great personages of the period with as much freedom from bias, and as much pains to be just, as if the author were delineating Pericles, or Alcibiades, Sulla, or Cæsar. Dr. Wilson has earned the gratitude of seekers after truth by his masterly production."—*N. C. University Magazine.*

"This admirable little volume is one of the few books which nearly meet our ideal of history. It is causal history in the truest sense, tracing the workings of latent influences and far-reaching conditions of their outcome in striking fact, yet the whole current of events is kept in view, and the great personalities of the time, the nerve-centers of history, live intensely and in due proportion in these pages. We do not know the equal of this book for a brief and trustworthy, and, at the same time, a brilliantly written and sufficient history of these sixty years. We heartily commend it, not only for general reading, but as an admirable text-book."—*Post-Graduate and Wooster Quarterly.*

"Considered as a general history of the United States from 1829 to 1889, his book is marked by excellent sense of proportion, extensive knowledge, impartiality of judgment, unusual power of summarizing, and an acute political sense. Few writers can more vividly set forth the views of parties."
—*Atlantic Monthly.*

"Students of United States history may thank Mr. Wilson for an extremely clear and careful rendering of a period very difficult to handle . . . they will find themselves materially aided in easy comprehension of the political situation of the country by the excellent maps."—*N. Y. Times.*

"Professor Wilson writes in a clear and forcible style. . . . The bibliographical references at the head of each chapter are both well selected and well arranged, and add greatly to the value of the work, which appears to be especially designed for use in instruction in colleges and preparatory schools."
—*Yale Review.*

"It is written in a style admirably clear, vigorous, and attractive, a thorough grasp of the subject is shown, and the development of the theme is lucid and orderly, while the tone is judicial and fair, and the deductions sensible and dispassionate—so far as we can see. . . . It would be difficult to construct a better manual of the subject than this, and it adds greatly to the value of this useful series."—*Hartford Courant.*

". . . One of the most valuable historical works that has appeared in many years. The delicate period of our country's history, with which this work is largely taken up, is treated by the author with an impartiality that is almost unique."—*Columbia Law Times.*

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

ENGLISH HISTORY FOR AMERICANS.

By THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON, Author of "Young Folks' History of the United States," etc., and EDWARD CHANNING, Assistant Professor of History in Harvard University. With 77 Illustrations, 6 Colored Maps, Bibliography, a Chronological Table of Contents, and Index. 12mo. Pp. xxxii-334. Teachers' price, $1.20.

The name "English History for Americans," which suggests the key-note of this book, is based on the simple fact that it is not the practice of American readers, old or young, to give to English history more than a limited portion of their hours of study. . . . It seems clear that such readers will use their time to the best advantage if they devote it mainly to those events in English annals which have had the most direct influence on the history and institutions of their own land. . . . The authors of this book have therefore boldly ventured to modify in their narrative the accustomed scale of proportion; while it has been their wish, in the treatment of every detail, to accept the best result of modern English investigation, and especially to avoid all unfair or one-sided judgments. . . . *Extracts from Author's Preface.*

DR. W. T. HARRIS, U. S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION.

"I take great pleasure in acknowledging the receipt of the book, and believe it to be the best introduction to English history hitherto made for the use of schools. It is just what is needed in the school and in the family. It is the first history of England that I have seen which gives proper attention to sociology and the evolution of political ideas, without neglecting what is picturesque and interesting to the popular taste. The device of placing the four historical maps at the beginning and end deserves special mention for its convenience. Allow me to congratulate you on the publication of so excellent a text-book."

ROXBURY LATIN SCHOOL.

". . . The most noticeable and commendable feature in the book seems to be its Unity. . . . I felt the same reluctance to lay the volume down . . . that one experiences in reading a great play or a well-constructed novel. Several things besides the unity conspire thus seductively to lead the reader on. The page is open and attractive, the chapters are short, the type is large and clear, the pictures are well chosen and significant, a surprising number of anecdotes told in a crisp and masterful manner throw valuable side-lights on the main narrative; the philosophy of history is undeniably there, but sugar-coated, and the graceful style would do credit to a Macaulay. I shall immediately recommend it for use in our school."—DR. D. O. S. LOWELL.

LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL.

"In answer to your note of February 23d I beg to say that we have introduced your Higginson's English History into our graduating class and are much pleased with it. Therefore whatever endorsement I, as a member of the Committee of Ten, could give the book has already been given by my action in placing it in our classes."—JAMES C. MACKENZIE, Lawrenceville, N. J.

ANN ARBOR HIGH SCHOOL.

"It seems to me the book will do for English history in this country what the 'Young Folks' History of the United States' has done for the history of our own country—and I consider this high praise."

—T. G. PATTENGILL, Ann Arbor, Mich.

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

A STUDENT'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND, from the Earliest Times to 1885.

By SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER, M.A., LL.D., Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, etc.; Author of "The History of England from the Accession of James I. to 1642," etc. Illustrated under the superintendence of Mr. W. H. ST. JOHN HOPE, Assistant Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, and with the assistance in the choice of Portraits of Mr. GEORGE SCHARF, C.B., F.S.A., who is recognized as the highest authority on the subject. In one Volume, with 378 Illustrations and full Index. Crown 8vo, cloth, plain, $3.00.

The book is also published in three Volumes (each with Index and Table of Contents) as follows :

VOLUME I.—B.C. 55–A.D. 1509. 410 pp. With 173 Illustrations and Index. Crown 8vo, $1.20.
VOLUME II.—A.D. 1509–1689. 332 pp. With 96 Illustrations and Index. Crown 8vo, $1.20.
VOLUME III.—A.D. 1689–1885. 374 pp. With 109 Illustrations and Index. Crown 8vo, $1.20.

⁂ Gardiner's "Student's History of England," through Part IX. (to 1789), is recommended by HARVARD UNIVERSITY as indicating the requirements for admission in this subject; and the ENTIRE work is made the basis for English history study in the University.

YALE UNIVERSITY.

"Gardiner's 'Student's History of England' seems to me an admirable short history."—Prof. C. H. SMITH, New Haven, Conn.

TRINITY COLLEGE, HARTFORD.

"It is, in my opinion, by far the best advanced school history of England that I have ever seen. It is clear, concise, and scientific, and, at the same time, attractive and interesting. The illustrations are very good and a valuable addition to the book, as they are not mere pretty pictures, but of real historical and archæological interest."—Prof. HENRY FERGUSON.

"A unique feature consists of the very numerous illustrations. They throw light on almost every phase of English life in all ages. . . . Never, perhaps, in such a treatise has pictorial illustration been used with so good effect. The alert teacher will find here ample material for useful lessons by leading the pupil to draw the proper inferences and make the proper interpretations and comparisons. . . . The style is compact, vigorous, and interesting. There is no lack of precision; and, in the selection of the details, the hand of the scholar thoroughly conversant with the source and with the results of recent criticism is plainly revealed."—*The Nation*, N. Y.

". . . It is illustrated by pictures of real value; and when accompanied by the companion 'Atlas of English History' is all that need be desired for its special purpose."—*The Churchman*, N. Y.

⁂ A prospectus and specimen pages of Gardiner's "Student's History of England" will be sent free on application to the publishers.

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

LONGMANS' SCHOOL GRAMMAR.

By David Salmon. Part I., Parts of Speech; Part II., Classification and Inflection; Part III., Analysis of Sentences; Part IV., History and Derivation. With Notes for Teachers and Index. New Edition, Revised. With Preface by E. A. Allen, Professor of English in the University of Missouri. 12mo. 272 pages. 75 cents.

". . . One of the best working grammars we have ever seen, and this applies to all its parts. It is excellently arranged and perfectly graded. Part IV., on History and Derivation, is as beautiful and interesting as it is valuable—but this might be said of the whole book."—New York *Teacher*.

"The Grammar deserves to supersede all others with which we are acquainted."—N. Y. *Nation*, July 2, 1891.

PREFACE TO AMERICAN EDITION.

It seems to be generally conceded that English grammar is worse taught and less understood than any other subject in the school course. This is, doubtless, largely due to the kind of text-books used, which, for the most part, require methods that violate the laws of pedagogy as well as of language. There are, however, two or three English grammars that are admirable commentaries on the facts of the language, but, written from the point of view of the scholar rather than of the learner, they fail to awaken any interest in the subject, and hence are not serviceable for the class-room.

My attention was first called to Longmans' School Grammar by a favorable notice of it in the *Nation*. In hope of finding an answer to the inquiry of numerous teachers for "the best school grammar," I sent to the Publishers for a copy. An examination of the work, so far from resulting in the usual disappointment, left the impression that a successful text-book in a field strewn with failures had at last been produced. For the practical test of the class-room, I placed it in the hands of an accomplished grammarian, who had tried several of the best grammars published, and he declares the results to be most satisfactory.

The author's simplicity of method, the clear statement of facts, the orderly arrangement, the wise restraint, manifest on every page, reveal the scholar and practical teacher. No one who had not mastered the language in its early historical development could have prepared a school grammar so free from senseless rules and endless details. The most striking feature, *minimum* of precept, *maximum* of example, will commend itself to all teachers who follow rational methods. In this edition, the Publishers have adapted the illustrative sentences to the ready comprehension of American pupils, and I take pleasure in recommending the book, in behalf of our mother tongue, to the teachers of our Public and Private Schools.

Edward A. Allen.

University of Missouri, May, 1891.

MR. HALE'S SCHOOL, BOSTON.

"I have used your Grammar and Composition during the last year in my school, and like them both very much indeed. They are the best books of the kind I have ever seen, and supply a want I have felt for a good many years."—Albert Hale, *Boston*, *Mass.*

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

LONGMANS' SCHOOL GRAMMAR.—*OPINIONS.*

GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, BOSTON, MASS.

"When you put Longmans' School Grammar in my hands, some year or two ago, I used it a little while with a boy of nine years, with perfect satisfaction and approval. The exigencies of the boy's school arrangements intercepted that course in grammar and caused the book to be laid aside. To-day I have taken the book and have examined it all, from cover to cover. It is simply a perfect grammar. Its beginnings are made with utmost gentleness and reasonableness, and it goes at least quite as far as in any portion of our public schools course it is, for the present, desirable to think of going. The author has adjusted his book to the very best conceivable methods of teaching, and goes hand in hand with the instructor as a guide and a help. Grammar should, so taught, become a pleasure to teacher and pupil. Especially do I relish the author's pages of 'Notes for Teachers,' at the end of the book. The man who could write these notes should enlarge them into a monograph on the teaching of English Grammar. He would, thereby, add a valuable contribution to our stock of available pedagogic helps. I must add in closing, that while the book in question has, of course, but small occasion to touch disputed points of English Grammar, it never incurs the censure that school grammars are almost sure to deserve, of insufficient acquaintance with modern linguistic science. In short, the writer has shown himself scientifically, as well as pedagogically, altogether competent for his task."

—PRINCIPAL SAMUEL THURBER.

HIGH SCHOOL, FORT WAYNE, IND.

". . . . It is not often that one has occasion to be enthusiastic over a school-book, especially over an English Grammar, but out of pure enthusiasm, I write to express my grateful appreciation of this one. It is, without exception, the best English Grammar that I have ever seen for children from twelve to fifteen years of age. It is excellent in matter and method. Every page shows the hand of a wise and skilful teacher. The author has been content to present the facts of English Grammar in a way intelligible to children. The book is so intelligible and so interesting from start to finish that only the genius of dulness can make it dry. There are no definitions inconsistent with the facts of our language, no facts at war with the definitions. There are other grammars that are more "complete" and as correct in teaching, but not one to be compared with it in adaptation to the needs of young students. It will not chloroform the intelligence."—PRINCIPAL C. T. LANE.

HIGH SCHOOL, MINOOKA, ILL.

"We introduced your School Grammar into our schools the first of this term, and are highly satisfied with the results. In my judgment there is no better work extant for the class of pupils for which it is designed."

—PRINCIPAL E. F. ADAMS.

NEWARK ACADEMY, NEWARK, N. J.

"We are using with much satisfaction your Longmans' School Grammar, adopted for use in our classes over a year since. Its strong points are simplicity of arrangement, and abundance of examples for practice. In these particulars I know of no other book equal to it."—DR. S. A. FARRAND.

⁂ *A Prospectus showing contents and specimen pages may be had of the Publishers.*

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

LONGMANS' SCHOOL GEOGRAPHY.

By GEORGE G. CHISHOLM, M.A., B.Sc., Author of "Handbook of Commercial Geography," "A Smaller Commercial Geography," etc., etc., and C. H. LEETE, A.M., Ph.D., Fellow of the American Geographical Society. Fourth edition, revised, large 12mo, with 70 Illustrations. 384 pages. $1.25.

The aim of this text-book is to present in an attractive form those facts of geography that are really foundational, *i.e.*, those that are most important to know, and are most effective as discipline. All countries and regions of the world are, therefore, not treated upon a uniform plan or according to a rigid outline, but that which is most distinctive and characteristic in each is presented with due relief. And, in order that pupils may realize that to understand is in geography equally, if not more, important than to memorize, special prominence is given to the relation of cause and effect. The book is especially suited for use in Normal Schools and in Schools where more than elementary geographical work is done.

⁂ *A descriptive circular of the book and of the Companion Atlas and Book of Questions, may be had of the Publishers.*

MILTON ACADEMY.

"It is the best Geography that I have seen, and we are using it in this school."
—HARRISON O. APTHORP, Milton, Mass.

MARIANNA MALE INSTITUTE.

"It is the best thing of the kind I have ever seen. It is just what I wish. I shall be pleased to introduce it."—T. A. FUTRALL, Marianna, Ark.

PREPARATORY SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

". . . Find it an excellent book. . . . It is striking and interesting—different from any work on the subject I have ever seen."—A. P. MONTAGUE.

"The closing paragraph of the prospectus is much closer to the opinion of the reviewer than such paragraphs usually are: 'This text-book adapts itself to pupils of intelligence, and will be highly appreciated by all teachers imbued with a spirit for teaching real geography, not attempting to supersede their functions by dictating the length of the daily tasks or the questions that shall be asked, but furnishing a body of material so selected, arranged, and presented that its perusal is at once pleasurable, suggestive, and of substantial value.' This is perfectly true. . . . On the whole the book is remarkably successful."—*Nation*, N. Y.

"This book is the forerunner of a change which must speedily be effected in geographical teaching, and is itself a product of the movement for reform in England, which originated with the Geographical Society."
—*Wisconsin Journal of Education.*

". . . Probably the best book of the kind ever published in our language, and ought to help in improving the instruction of our schools in geography. Messrs, Chisholm and Leete's book is valuable for its method, and it is this fact which entitles it to the attention of teachers."—*Boston Beacon.*

"It has a system of cross references that is very valuable and constantly reminds the pupil that all are parts of a whole. It does not merely state facts, but attempts to show a cause for each phenomenon, so that the study of geography is not mere memoriter work."—*Educational Courant.*

LONGMANS, GREEN, & CO., 15 East Sixteenth Street, New York.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library
1 1012 01118 9794

DATE DUE

[redacted]
[redacted]
OCT [redacted]

GAYLORD
PRINTED IN U.S.A.